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Official Game Adventure

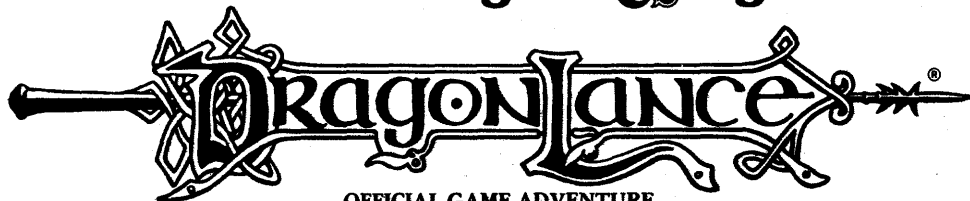
Mists of Krynn



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OFFICIAL GAME ADVENTURE

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Distributed to the book trade in the United States by Random House, Inc., and in Canada by Random House of Canada, Ltd.
Distributed to the toy and hobby trade by regional distributors.
Distributed in the United Kingdom by TSR, Inc.
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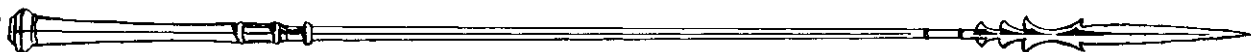
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Adventures





Between a Dragon and his Wrath



"Between a Dragon and His Wrath" is a DRAGONLANCE® adventure for a well-balanced party between 3d and 5th levels, set in the lands of Nordmaar. Although the adventure is best set a generation after the War of the Lance, the DM should have little trouble placing it at other times in Ansalon's history.

Although the adventure is reasonably self-complete, the DM will find that module DL12, *Dragons of Faith*, which details the lands and waters around the Blood Sea, provides a wealth of helpful detail about the setting.

Throughout this adventure, all NPCs are considered to be proficient in swimming, and the DM might hint to the players that such a skill would be appropriate for their characters as well. Also, the adventure works best if at least one of the player characters has previous ship-board experience.

DM's Introduction

The currents swept south along Kothas's barren eastern shores, and the north-bound winds whistled a siren song overhead, cajoling the waves to crash white-headed into the rocky shore. The sun was secure behind clouds, casting a gray pall over the scene and a chill through Cordelia's bones. She wore her thick flax robes, their sleeves rolled up for her hideously short arms. She had failed. She had failed the Test, an apprentice's first Circus, and the laws of her culture were cold to her now. She had failed to choose between her beauty and her craft, and her hesitation had cost her both, and more besides. She was small, weak, and pitiful now, hairless except for a black mane that caught the wind and fluttered over her left shoulder. The magic of Nuitari would be forever denied her, but perhaps his tides would embrace her instead.

"Cordelia," came a shout from behind her. She turned, and it was Governor Frachier-knol, one of Kothas's lesser nobles. His fur was well-worn from his rugged activities, his horns were smooth and stout, and his muscles still surged under his jerkin despite his two-score years. She turned back to the sea, cursing

her newly-crippled senses. She should have smelled him coming.

"What does the Lord of Windbreak want with an outcast? I had hoped to depart without fanfare."

Frachier-knolls wording was formal and stiff, but Cordelia heard an urgency behind them. "I am here to dissuade you, to offer you a second chance. Yes, you have lost your woman's ways, but the monstrous shape you have assumed presents me with a most attractive opportunity I bid you come, and I will tell you how you may find in this set-back the seed for the greatest confirmation since the days of legends."

Cordelia only smiled at this boast, but she offered no resistance when Frachier-knol led her away from the shores of the Courrain. And so began the Lord of Windbreak's most ambitious enterprise.

Synopsis

Eiril Thorvaldsson was too young to have participated in the War of the Lance, but he waited precious few years afterward before coming to prominence in the northern waters of the Sirrion as a born sailor, an inspired tactician, and a leader of men and women. For a time he was known as the Dread Pirate Eiril, renowned for his battle skill and ruthlessness toward his enemies. None survived his raids.

Because of his growing notoriety, Eiril retired after a time. He traveled around Ansalon, finding the best shipwrights to build for him *Heart of Justice*, an enchanted ship made from expensive hardwoods. He turned to the safer, less sensational career of armed companion to the merchant ships on the Blood Sea. Now known as Eiril Rosewood, his reputation grew so that even the Black Dragonarmy hesitated to raid Eiril's ship or harry his charges.

The minotaurs of the Blood Sea were not so compliant. Frachier-knol, a petty minotaur noble from the southern tip of Kothas, demanded action of the Council on Mithas. But cooler, more patient heads prevailed. Eiril's renown made all the merchants feel safer, which was to the minotaurs' liking. But Frachier-knol was

not satisfied, and began to plan on his own, though without results for some 15 years.

Only last autumn, he heard news of a young minotaur woman named Cordelia, who had not only failed her Rite of Passage, but had moreover been *polymorphed* into a human, a form unpleasant to a minotaur's eyes. But Frachier-knol knew that Cordelia was still lovely in her new form, and so a plan began to grow in his mind.

He enlisted Cordelia in a plan that would bring Eiril to destruction, a major political coup. He sent her to the mainland, to move from port to port until she found Eiril.

Once she had done so, Cordelia acted to seduce the charismatic sailor, the better to lay a trap for him. But Cordelia lost her heart to Eiril as he did to her. And more, she learned of his growing fears.

Eiril was nearing his fortieth year, and although his health was magnificent, he could feel the waning of his youth, and he felt an unfocused sense of urgency. He said that Cordelia made him feel 15 years younger, but she could tell that he wanted more. And Frachier-knol's plans for Eiril's demise bore heavily on Cordelia.

It was about this time that she came upon an idea that might satisfy all concerned. Rather than killing Eiril, Frachier-knol could recruit him, a far greater coup. And a return to swashbuckling piracy might be just what Eiril needed.

The Lord of Windbreak was amenable. "I admire your inventiveness, Cordelia. Yes, Eiril Rosewood will be a much better prize alive and working for me. And he is right, he is growing too old for this business. When his utility is spent, so will be his life."

Cordelia nodded. So relieved was she that Eiril would be spared that she did not catch Frachier's ominous implications.

Eiril, too, agreed to a return to the excitement of piracy, if only as a fling. But he would have to abandon his crew in such a way that they would take him back afterward. At a meeting in the seaboard city of Jennison, Frachier suggested that Eiril and Cordelia disappear one after-



noon, “kidnaped by minotaurs.” Eiril would arrange for Bertrand, a famous Kalamanian shipwright living in Jennison, to construct a ship of unsurpassed speed and maneuverability, which would be part of a “ransom” the crew would have to pay. Of course, Eiril and his new allies would take the vessel and cast off to a new time of adventures. His old crew would be left marooned for a time, but close enough to shipping lanes that they would eventually be rescued. Frachier-knol smiled broadly. He said he knew just the island.

These discussions proceeded for a little over an hour, completely overheard by a band of nigh-invisible skulks. The skulks quietly made their own plans regarding particulars of Frachier’s schemes.

The adventure

Jennison is a city of 3,000, one of the major ports of Nordmaar, about a dozen miles north of the ruins of Valkinord. The lands are squarely under the control of the Black Dragonarmy, and times are harsh. There is a strict curfew, with no one outside the Dragonarmies being allowed on the streets from an hour past sundown to an hour before dawn. Kender and most dwarves are considered vermin; elves are enemies, nowhere safe. Weapons larger than darts and daggers are forbidden, as are any services for the worship of good gods. White Robe wizards are hunted down as furiously as are renegade magic-users.

Yet daily life continues. Jennison is a thriving community, the last large port for ships traveling east to the Blood Sea. The city is renowned for the ale that passes through her bars and some of the finest shipwrights this side of Ansalon. And despite the city’s tight regulations, there is an active black market (operating from the docks) and a discreet Thieves’ Guild.

Ideally, the party is here between adventures, or perhaps during a lull in a long, uneventful espionage mission. None of the moons are in either High or Low Sanction, but Nuitari will be High in four days. In any case, it is a cool afternoon when a player character (preferably

a strong-looking fighter or a robed wizard) is accosted by a humble-looking man. His clothes are well-worn, and his hands are weathered and calloused. He introduces himself as Austin. “I’m looking for a few strong hands to help me with a problem. There’s 50 steel apiece for anyone who cares to give a couple hours’ honest work.”

Trouble in The hold

Austin is the mate aboard *Shinare’s Darling*, a merchant galley in port. This morning, he sent two men down into the hold to begin unloading some cargo, two men who have not come back up. There’s been some thumping and cracking in the hold as well, and none of Austin’s men dare to go down. He means to enlist the aid of the player characters to clear the hold of whatever vermin are down there, rescue the two men (or recover what’s left of them), and make certain that none of the cargo is disturbed. The captain of the *Darling* is meeting with her owners this day to discuss the most recent voyage, and Austin has only the three hours till sundown to resolve matters before the captain returns.

In fact, Austin has less time than that. The captain of the *Darling*, a short, heavyset man named Fernandin, employed Eiril Rosewood as a guard some months ago, and Eiril’s payment—five flawless pink-and-blue streaked sapphires—is on board. And Fernandin will be returning to the *Darling* within an hour to send the payment on its way. This treasure is to be used as Eiril’s final payment to the shipwright Bertrand. The skulks of Jennison, who overheard Eiril’s plotting with Frachier-knol, knew about the payment, determined that *Shinare’s Darling* did indeed hold the sapphires, and have contrived to make away with them.

The *Darling* is a 50-foot-long merchantman, with one main mast and smaller sails fore and aft, requiring a full crew of 15 to man both the rigging and the armaments. The only structure above deck is the wheelroom, which doubles as the ‘captain’s offices. There are three levels below deck. The upper two levels

contain the crew’s quarters and auxiliary rowing stations for emergency situations. The lower level is the hold. It has a “chimney” 10 feet square, allowing access to the cargo space below. The hold is seven feet high, usually packed tight with supplies and merchandise. Twisting aisles wind through the crates, an unnerving situation that has served only to intensify the crew’s jitters.

Early this morning, the ship was infested with four skulks (AC 7; MV 12”; HD 2; hp 11 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 16; SA nil; SD Camouflage). The skulks are all armed with short swords (dmg 1d6), and one has a light crossbow (dmg 1d4), the quarrels of which are drugged. A failure on the part of the target to save vs. poison results in a comatose sleep for 5d4 hours. The drug is neutralized by appropriate spells or by temperatures above 100 degrees. These creatures meant to locate the sapphires, set fire to the ship, and escape in the confusion. However, two sailors entered the hold before the skulks had found their prize, and the men were taken and drugged, the better to awaken and die when the *Darling* is set afire. The resulting attention from those on deck has made it impossible for the skulks to escape in broad daylight, so they now intend to wait for nightfall before destroying the ship.

The party will arrive just 20 minutes or so before Fernandin returns. The crew reports to Austin that the bumps and crackings have continued, but that nothing is yet visible from the deck. If the PCs have had a hard time getting their weapons and armor to the ship, Austin can loan them long swords and shields. He can also furnish them with details as to the two ways to the hold. The most direct is to use the ladder bolted to the side of the “chimney,” while a more conventional route would involve the three flights of stairs leading through the two lower levels to the aft section of the hold. There are sailors posted at each entrance, making sure that nothing has left the hold. Neither Austin nor any of the crew feels bold enough to go any farther.

Once in the hold, the party will find that the crates make an impromptu



maze. Any light extends only to the next corner, several feet away, although the light casts impressive shadows beyond. The aisles are only two feet wide or so, requiring the party to progress in single file and in cramped conditions. (This makes any mapping of the hold impossible.) Many of the smaller boxes have been broken open, their contents scattered over the crates and the aisles alike. At the stern, there are two large casks of oil, surrounded by piles of light wood shavings that are soaked in oil. Near the firetrap are the drugged bodies of the two sailors.

The noises are a trap. A clear pathway runs almost the entire length of the hold, and the skulks are hoping that the party will pursue the noises. Halfway to their destination, the party is ambushed by three of the skulks while the fourth (armed with the crossbow) fires at the front character from 10 feet ahead of the party. The ambushing skulks attempt to backstab for triple damage. During this attack, the skulks make no noise, and shy away from looking into the PCs' faces. In the second round, the skulk with the crossbow again shoots for the lead characters and then ducks away from sight. The others concentrate their attacks on any character with a light source, seeking to extinguish it. (Although skulks do not have infravision, they are all considered to have the blind-fighting nonweapon proficiency.)

After the second round of combat, the transparent men flee from view, running in every direction. If any player character attempts to pursue, he should roll an Intelligence Check with a +3 penalty to the roll. If the roll is successful, the PC may engage a skulk in normal combat on the fourth round. If not, the skulk in question attempts another backstab before fleeing again. Such tactics put the party at a clear disadvantage, but certain spells may turn the tide. A web, for example, will cover nearly the entire hold.

If left unmolested until the fourth round of combat, the skulk armed with a crossbow will find a redwood box, six inches high with a nine-inch square base, decorated with a carved border of roses on

the top. He will call out "Sithearii," the skulk word for "I have them," and head slowly aftwards. The others will move likewise, preferring to escape rather than ambush. They will also seek to escape if only two of their number are still alive or if all of them have been wounded.

Their plan is to light the kindling around the casks of oil in the stern (a task that should take two rounds), wait for the flames to spread, and make way to the floor immediately beneath the deck via the stairs, escaping through the oar slots during the confusion. Once the skulks light the wood shavings, immediately noticeable to all in the hold, the party has only two rounds before the flames spread to the oil and the entire hold catches fire. The party should not let matters go this far; now only two successful Dexterity Checks (or climb walls rolls for thieves) and a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon will save a player character from a particularly nasty death. In this event, the crew captures the skulks and retrieves the sapphires, but the *Darling* is consumed by fire and the party does not get paid.

If the party does rid the hold of the skulks and rescue the two men, Austin is grateful, but still disturbed over the state of the hold. He will offer to pay half of what he promised, since the PCs did not keep the hold as undisturbed as he would have liked. A successful Charisma Check by any of the PCs will persuade Austin to honor his full commitment. If the player characters spent more than 20 rounds in the hold, Fernandin returns, and Austin is quick with explanations. Fernandin is pleased with the PCs' work and promises to let others in Jennison know of their expertise.

The Offer

The next morning, the party receives word that Eiril Rosewood wishes to have a word with them at the nearest docks shortly after the noon bells. Certainly, the player characters have heard the tales of Eiril's defiance of the Dragonarmies and minotaur piracy. Eiril cuts a dashing figure, and is a favorite subject for the coastland bards. His offer is an honor indeed.

A half hour before noon, Eiril does indeed arrive at the meeting place. With him are his beloved Cordelia, his bodyguard Griselda, and his first mate Munir.

Eiril Rosewood: AC 6; MV 12"; F6; hp 34; #AT 2; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 16; S16 I15 W 12 D 14 Cn12 Ch18; AL N. Eiril is a handsome man, with wide streaks of gray complementing his sandy brown hair. He stands 6'1" and looks taller still. He smiles easily and his hearty laughter puts most companions at ease. His clothing tends toward blues and blacks, with a loose-fitting shirt under an open leather vest. He wears *bracers of defense* AC 6 and carries a *scimitar* +2 which he has named "Adria's Mercy" and in which he has a double weapon specialization. The scimitar has the additional power of *invisibility* when sheathed, allowing Eiril to carry it in Jennison. He is known to carry one or two potions with him as well, usually a potion of *heroism* or a philter of *glibness*, as well as mundane coins worth 50 steel or so.

Eiril is a born leader. If he and his crew know each other well, they gain a +15% morale bonus.

When Fernandin told Eiril about the adventurers, the swashbuckler was intrigued. He set about refining the "kidnaping" plan. Originally, he and Cordelia would simply disappear, a situation that had never really satisfied Eiril. Now he and his beloved are to be abducted by minotaurs in broad daylight, with appropriate theatrics, such that the PCs could bear witness to the kidnaping. And so he arranged this meeting, along with a band of four minotaur "assailants" waiting to play along with Eiril's little idea. Unfortunately, the skulks have overheard this plan as well.

Cordelia: AC 8; MV 12"; MU3; hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 20; S14 I15 W9 D15 Cn10 Ch14; AL LN. Cordelia is now an attractive woman, standing 5'6" and looking to be in her early 20s. She seems eager to make the PCs' acquaintance, and engages one or another in light conversation. She wears an unspectacular linen blouse and a deep maroon skirt, which matches her *cloak of protection* +1. She carries three darts,



hidden up her sleeves, but is otherwise unarmed. She has memorized the spells *charm person*, *shield*, and *pyrotechnics*. (Her spell book is on board Eiril's ship, and contains the additional spells of *burning hands*, *reduce*, *forget*, *knock*, and *ray of enfeeblement*.)

Cordelia is worried about the theatrics Eiril has planned. While she cares not a fig if the party or members of Eiril's crew die in the "kidnaping," she is concerned that either she or Eiril might get hurt. She also fears that Eiril might be underestimating the PCs and dooming their escape to failure. But she is an excellent actress, and hides her concern well. She has also memorized some spells that might protect Eiril or bedevil a player character.

Griselda: AC 5; MV 9"; F4; hp 11; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 18; S14 I8 W14 D18 Cn14 Ch12; AL LG. Griselda stands 5'10" and her blonde hair is pulled back into a tight bun that does nothing to highlight her better features. Her attitude is one of caution and aloofness. What little she says to the party is pleasant enough, but her attention is focused on the surrounding alleys and rooftops. She knows that Eiril has his share of enemies, and she means to protect him from them. Griselda wears her chain mail under a loose, padded coat, so that only the soft shingling of the mail hints at her martial preparedness. She carries a short sword (also hidden under her coat) and a potion that has the same effects as a *neutralize poison* spell.

Munirr: AC 9; MV 12"; F4; hp 32; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 18; S17 I12 W18 D14 Cn17 Ch13; AL LG. Munirr is a kindly looking man, standing 5'8", and wearing his deep brown hair long, with a well-groomed beard. He wears a comfortable outfit of dark greens and grays, subtly padded for protection. He is a Knight of the Crown, and he has sworn loyalty to Eiril, not only as an able shipman but also as an advisor and counselor on many matters. It is Munirr who has stood beside Eiril longest of all the crew, and he enjoys much respect from crew and captain alike. He is unarmed, but his pouch contains two flasks, which hold potions of *hill giant strength* and *healing*.

Munirr has noticed recent changes in Eiril's behavior, but can find no explanation. He dissented on Eiril's decision to buy the speedy new ship ("It's useless for our duties as merchant guards."). But when Eiril announced that he was going to meet with the adventurers who ensured the safety of the sapphires, Munirr insisted on coming along. After all, the party might be prime candidates for employment, now that Eiril would have two ships to crew. Eiril recognized that Munirr would be in danger, but saw no way to avoid the issue.

When he meets the party, Eiril offers congratulations on their successful adventure aboard the *Darling*. Introductions are made all around, and then he explains that the skulks were after the sapphires that the ship's captain owed him, and that went to pay for Eiril's new ship, the *Will o' Wisp*.

"Secondary vessel," corrects Munirr.

Eiril agrees, slightly irritated, perhaps somewhat tense. He says that Bertrand is due to finish the *Will o' Wisp* tomorrow, and offers to show the party just what merchandise they have enabled Eiril to buy.

The party follows Eiril down a few blocks to Bertrand's shop on the waterfront. There they see the *Will o' Wisp*, and even Munirr nods in appreciation. She is 63 feet long, and just under 10 feet wide. She has one main mast, arranged in an unusual "ball-and-socket" joint (magical, Cordelia assumes) that enables the sails to catch difficult winds. This joint also can cause the mast to fold down almost flat against the deck. The ship has 25 points of Hull Value. She is armed with two heavy ballistae up front and three heavy crossbows in the back. There is ample room for 15 fighting men on each side of the deck, and galleys below can hold 20 oarsmen. (Munirr looks doubtful that Eiril could afford to pay for such a crew and still break even, but he keeps these thoughts to himself.) From the small forecabin supporting the ballistae to the light battering ram to the shielded wheelhouse, the ship seems well-prepared for combat.

As Eiril proudly explains that this is the fastest and most maneuverable ship on

the Blood Sea, the "kidnaping" begins.

Five Minotaur Thugs: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 8+4; hp 45 each; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 2d4/1d4 or by weapon; THAC0 12; SA nil; SD Surprised only on a 1; AL LE

One of the minotaurs is armed with a great club (2d4 points of damage), two carry large spears (1d6+2 points of damage), and the others carry halberds. The party gets only the briefest look at the minotaurs' charge, however, as Frachier-knol's personal wizard stands in the shadows.

Tor-hoch: AC 2; MV 12"; MU 5; hp 24; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d4 or by weapon; THAC0 20; S16 I16 W11 D18 Cn16 Ch12; AL LE

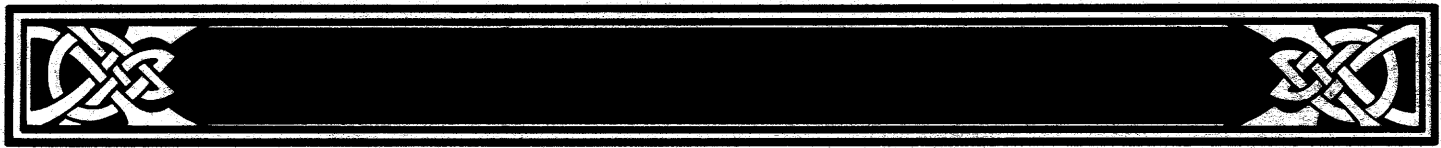
Having gained surprise, Tor-hoch throws a slow spell over the congregation, followed by *stinking cloud*. Both spells cover the entire party except for Griselda, unless a player character has previously stated actions that would make this impossible.

Tor and the minotaurs armed with spears grab Eiril and Cordelia and turn to flee, reciting melodramatic lines they feel are appropriate for a kidnaping, such as "Haw haw! You two will earn us a pretty ransom." Griselda pulls her weapon and rushes the minotaurs. She misses once before she is slashed to ribbons and falls dead. "And so fare all who try to stop us!" shout the minotaurs with a trifle more enthusiasm. Eiril looks on in horror as his fears prove true.

The three remaining minotaurs follow at a distance, leading the PCs into a waterfront alley. There, the minotaurs drop a 30-foot-diameter net over most of the party (requiring a Dexterity Check on the part of each PC to avoid the net, made with a +7 penalty if the character is still slowed). The minotaurs then laugh and depart, leaving Munirr and the player characters as witnesses to the kidnaping.

The net is weighted but easy to cut, requiring a weapon in hand and two successful attacks on rope of AC 9. Unfortunately, the skulks of Jennison have been lying in wait nearby, and they rush to take advantage of the helpless party.

Six Skulks: AC 7; MV 12"; HD 2; hp 8 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 16; SA Nil; SD camouflage; AL CE



The skulks are all armed with short swords and fall on the party, gaining +4 to hit until the PCs are freed. The minotaurs are surprised. They don't mind the distraction, but they'll drive away the skulks if the combat looks bad for the witnesses for whom they went to such trouble.

This encounter is designed to make certain that Eiril and Cordelia do indeed escape with their "captors." It is possible that a foresightful, clever, strong, and lucky party might be able to defeat the minotaur "rear guard" and reach Eiril and company before they reach the minotaurs' ship, 20 rounds away. If so, Tor will turn and face the party. His remaining spells are *magic missile* (x2), *sleep* (x2), and *web*. He carries a *staff* +2 and a packet of *dust of sneezing and choking*. In the unlikely event that the party is still capable of reaching Eiril, all bets are off. Eiril will conclude that his plan backfired, he and Cordelia will join the minotaurs in attacking the PCs. If the minotaurs win, they will leave the party for dead and contact Eiril's remaining crew for "ransom." The fact that the PCs know better might prove to be a great advantage.

Once the minotaurs board their ship, pursuit really isn't a realistic option. Minotaur sailors are legendary for their skills in the Blood Sea, and Eiril's crew could never overtake them in the *Heart of Justice*. The *Will o' Wisp* might be able to match the speed of the minotaur ship, but the sailors just don't know enough about her. Bereft of captain, with night coming on, they would be committing suicide if they tried following the minotaurs.

The ransom demand

As soon as he is able, Munirr collects Griselda's corpse and the player characters and brings them all to the *Heart of Justice*. She is a 70-foot-long warship, made of enchanted woods that offer her a +5 bonus on her saving throws vs. spell. She carries three masts, each supporting a triangular sail. The largest sail is sandy brown and decorated with Eiril's badge, four swords in saltire, argent, and overall a rose, proper. A three-tier forecastle, two

aft catapults, and sturdy battlements along each side speak for her combat prowess. There is assembled a crew of about 35, mostly humans with some elves and dwarves.

All eyes turn to Munirr. He explains as best he can what happened, and introduces the party to the crew's leaders: Hafgrim Foammage, the crew's chief wizard; Vaughn, the helmsman; Gjafny, a barbarian maiden who leads the crew's 15 men-at-arms; and the dwarf Styrkunn, a cleric of Habbakuk who serves as Master of Sails.

Gjafny is a bit suspicious of the party, whom she sees as a motley collection of strangers who appeared suddenly and did nothing to keep Griselda alive or the captain safe. Munirr silences her sharply, pointing out the PCs' heroism. After some discussion, the crew concludes that a ransom demand is likely, and that such would be the best opportunity for the crew to reclaim Eiril and get revenge upon the pirates. Munirr offers the party lodging on the ship, as curfew is approaching rapidly.

Sure enough, the next morning brings a messenger with the following notice for the *Heart of Justice*: "I, Frachier-knol, the Lord of Windbreak, have captured captain Eiril Rosewood, who has cost me greatly in the past years. I have done so to revenge myself, and to return to Eiril some of the expense. If his brave crew desires to see him again, arrange for payment of 25,000 steel pieces, or the equivalent in precious gems and magic. I have set forth the following arrangements for payment.

"Eiril's stout-hearted crew must reach a small outcropping of rock two miles south-east of the island Saifhum. I have marked the rock with my black and gold banner. There will I exchange Captain Eiril for the ransom, on the morning of Nuitari's High Sanction. On my honor, if the ransom is not paid, his crew shall never see him again."

Again, the crew will hotly debate the options. They conclude that they ought to sail the *Heart of Justice*, as it is sturdier, enchanted to be more resistant against magical attacks, more familiar to the crew, better armed, and a less attractive

prize for the minotaurs. They also decide that the ransom ought to be a half-dozen chests of coins, impossible to count on the spot and only worth perhaps a couple thousand steel. Close as the rendezvous point is to the good lands of Saifhum, the minotaurs cannot afford a show of strength, so they will most likely bring only one ship, and the *Heart of Justice* has a winning record when fighting minotaur vessels.

As discussions settle down to a low roar and Gjafny forms battle strategy against likely opposition, Munirr takes the PCs aside to speak privately with them. "I have uncomfortable suspicions about this," he admits. "And they lead me to believe that this ransom payment will be nothing more than an ambush." He has a proposal for the party. He can offer them little other than satisfaction; the crew's treasure has been depleted to pay for the *Will o' Wisp*, but he personally owns a *long bow* +2, which he will present to the PCs as payment for some help in a little plan of his own.

Munirr intends to draw five sailors and five men-at-arms, about one third the *Heart of Justice's* total crew, onto the *Will o' Wisp*, to follow *Heart of Justice* out of sight. (With her collapsible masts, she can get twice as close to the rendezvous point as she might otherwise.) That way, if the pirates damage the main ship, the *Will o' Wisp* can come in, pick up the stranded crew, and pursue. Munirr would like the PCs' help in this, staying with the *Will o' Wisp* and protecting her. Also on the new ship would be Hafgrim Foammage and Styrkunn.

If the party is agreeable, Munirr will thank them and go to work, quietly gathering those forces he needs for his private plan. If asked, he chooses to keep his suspicions, that Eiril and Cordelia have been *charmed* or otherwise enthralled by the minotaurs, unvoiced.

fiasco

The Blood Sea of Istar's main feature is the Maelstrom, a semi-permanent whirlpool, about a hundred miles in diameter, that draws ships to their doom and churns the water red. It turns clockwise, so dar-



ing ships can pick up speed in that direction by dropping close to the Maelstrom and then pulling away with added momentum.

But the prevailing winds around Istar run in a counterclockwise pattern, so that powerful sailing vessels can complete a circuit around the Blood Sea's edges and never lose the wind. These two forces make the Blood Sea treacherous, and only the most expert of pilots dare live by her whims.

The PCs must arrive at the docks just before dawn. There they board the *Will o' Wisp* and follow five miles behind the *Heart of Justice*. She smells of new pine and cedar, and her blue sails are new and perfect. The 10 crew members busy themselves learning the feel of the ship, with Styrkunn shouting orders that put the *Will o' Wisp* through a number of simple maneuvers. The PCs can either volunteer to help (with only the simplest jobs unless a particular player character has already served on a ship) or just stay out of the way. As the winds are against her, and as there aren't nearly enough hands to spare for the oars, the ship has nearly five hours of sailing ahead of her before she reaches the rendezvous point.

If there are any magic-users among the party, Hafgrim would enjoy "talking shop" with them.

Hafgrim Foamage: AC 7; MV 12"; MU 4; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; THAC0 20; S9 I17 W13 D16 Cn17 Ch14; AL NG

Hafgrim is a White-Robed wizard, his colors being white and sea-blue. He is lively and energetic, bringing a true enthusiasm to whatever he does. He has two apprentices, Viturbo and Emilia, who sail with the *Heart of Justice*. (He confides that he is quite proud of them, although he'd deny it to their faces.) The spells he has memorized are *firewater*, *jump*, *shocking grasp*, *ESP*, and *detect invisibility*.

He carries with him a *Staff of defense* +1 which offers a -1 Armor Class improvement and a +1 bonus on all saving throws as well as being +1 to hit and damage in combat. The *Staff* sensitive to the moons of Krynn, and can become +2 or even +3 if more than one moon is

at High Sanction; it becomes nonmagical if more than one moon is in Low Sanction. He has also brought a scroll, with the spells *fly* and *airy water*.

Styrkunn is busy for the journey. He could spend a year learning the subtleties of the vessel, and he has but hours. He has no time for idle chatter, but will be glad to assign some work to a bothersome PC.

Styrkunn: AC 6; MV 9"; C4; hp 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 18; S15 I14 W14 D11 Cn17 Ch14; AL NG

The dwarf is a cleric of Habbakuk, the good god of the sea, and he wears his *medallion of faith* outside his leather armor. In addition to special spells, Styrkunn has prayed for *invisibility to animals*, *purify water*, *speak with animals*, *dust devil*, and *quench flame*. He carries a *shield* +1 and a *hammer* +1 into combat. He also owns a *potion of healing* and a *rope of climbing*. He has the non-weapon proficiency of healing.

The *Will o' Wisp* is more maneuverable than her companion, and she has difficulties keeping behind the other ship. But Styrkunn soon knows much about her and has her well under control. And so, with mast resting low, she waits, just beyond the horizon from the rendezvous island, waiting for a signal.

After a short time, Hafgrim spies smoke in the direction of the island, and calls an alert. The crew raises the mast immediately and Styrkunn begins sailing in.

Unfortunately, the local winds are still fighting the *Will o' Wisp*. Tacking into the wind, zigzagging toward the island, the party can see that *Heart of Justice* has been put to the torch. Her sails are gone, and her hull is damaged beyond repair.

The island is not more than a couple hundred feet long and half as wide, the highest point marked with a great banner: a black field charged with a gold shield. The rocks are covered in small purple flowers, and the wind carries their scent over the *Will o' Wisp*. The wind also carries shouts of panic, as the remaining crew members scramble over the rocks, desperately afraid of something. As soon as the party has taken this in, they see a monstrous moth shape slowly

rise from behind a high outcropping and bear down on the stranded survivors. Another ship can be seen sailing away in the distance, heading due east, her black and gold flags waving in front of her.

Quick action is required to save as many survivors as possible. (None of the *Will o' Wisp's* crew are likely to take kindly to any suggestions about abandoning their stranded companions.) The DM should assume that there are 25 survivors at first sighting, and three crew members are slain every two rounds by the monsters on the island.

Frachier-knol chose this island precisely because he knew it to be infested with fell creatures. Eiril's men are being attacked by a gloomwing (AC 1; MV 12" [MC: D]; HD 5+1; hp 21; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d8; THAC0 15; SA pheromone, surprise; SD: confusion; AL N) and two of her young, tenebrous worms (AC 1; MV 1" //6"; HD 10; hp 45, 41; #AT 1; Dmg 2d10; THAC0 10; SA acid; SD poison bristles; AL N). These creatures have only animal intelligence, but they are ruthless hunters, and the crew members have nowhere to run. If left unmolested, the monsters will kill all of the surviving crew in short order.

Of the 25 survivors, 10 are 1st-level men-at-arms and 10 are 0th-level sailors. One of each is killed every two rounds, and the third casualty is from the following list of NPCs, in order: Viturbo, Vaughn the helmsman, Emilia, Munirr (injured), Munirr (dead), Gjafny (injured), Gjafny (dead), Cordelia (see below).

Viturbo and Emilia, Hafgrim's apprentices, are 1st-level magic-users who have memorized *sleep* and *jump* respectively, neither of which is very useful. They fight with daggers until they are killed. Vaughn is a non-combatant and dies without a struggle.

Munirr fights as best he can, attacking one of the tenebrous worms with his *bastard sword* +2 and wearing leather armor banded with elegant brass reinforcements (AC 6). It takes him quite a while to fall, and he wounds the tougher worm for 25 points of damage before he falls.

Gjafny: AC 5; MV 12"; B3; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 18; S17



I13 W11 D15 Cn13 Ch16; AL N

Gjafny is a sea barbarian, tall and thin, with short-cropped strawberry blonde hair. She wears simple leather armor and fights with broad sword and shield. Normally she is a well-spoken leader of her men-at-arms, utterly loyal to her captain and her ship. But she has been taken off-balance and is not holding up well under the strain.

Gjafny is under the effects of a potion of *invulnerability*, but these creatures are powerful enough to ignore its effects. Because of this, she has panicked, attacking anything that gets near her, including her own men. She still carries a potion of heroism, but she is deathly afraid to use it and risk potion interaction. It takes the gloomwing a while to finish her off, but the beast only receives 15 points of damage doing so.

When Eiril and Cordelia met up with Frachier-knol, the minotaur decided that Cordelia's usefulness had run its course. He imprisoned her in a hold below deck, to wait for her execution at sea. Eiril protested vigorously, as he loved Cordelia. Then Frachier-knol explained to Eiril that his beloved was a minotaur herself. Eiril was repulsed, and he forsook her. But he could not bear to see her drowned, so he asked Frachier-knol if she might be left with his crew. The minotaur smiled broadly and agreed.

Broken in spirit, spurned by the man she loves, Cordelia has been left on this island to die. She no longer has her *cloak of protection*, and has spent her *charm person* spell on Frachier-knol, who succeeded in shrugging off its effects. Unless the PCs save her, she is attacked and killed by the gloomwing.

As the monsters move in to kill their first victims, the *Will o' Wisp* begins 150' from the rocks, and can close at 9" per round. The ship's rowboats cannot move faster than 6" per round, but Hafgrim announces he is willing to use his scroll on any player character who might want to fly to the rescue.

Most players will have their characters rescue Cordelia, if for no other reason than curiosity as to how she came to be on the island. Cordelia has information about Frachier-knol and Windbreak that

may be crucial for the party, and the DM should afford the PCs every opportunity to rescue her, as her cries for salvation echo over the rocks. If the PCs are hesitant about rescuing her (perhaps believing her to be a trap of some sort), Hafgrim notices her and suggests that she be "captured" for interrogation. If the party still resists saving her, she dies, broken-hearted and despairing.

Once the PCs have saved as many survivors as possible, with Stykunn tending to any serious wounds, they can learn what happened.

Any of *Heart of Justice's* crew will claim that Eiril has returned to a life of piracy. "The captain, he was in on the whole thing," is how a common crewman might explain. "Most of us stayed on board, with just Mister Munirr and a few others settin' foot on the island.

"Then the minotaurs came in with their great bull-headed ship, and the captain was with 'em. I think they were expectin' us to bring the new ship, for they were none too pleased to see the *Justice*. Eiril boarded her, and we welcomed him back, 'cause he acted like he was rescued. Then, just as Lady Gjafny was explainin' to him how we were going to attack once he was safe, he turned on us and set the *Justice* aflamin' with some magic wand he pulled out.

"Well, we were sure surprised by this, and then he jumped ship and swam back to his minotaur pals. They threw the lady Cordelia overboard, and the captain called out to us that we'd be all right as long as we swam to the island. I could hear their laughter when that giant moth-thing appeared and started killin' us."

Munirr's version, more literate, differs little. He was close enough to estimate that the minotaurs had at least 20 crew members but not many more than that, that Tor was certainly on board (unless the player characters killed the minotaur wizard in Jennison), and that the carved bull-head figurehead expelled infrequent magical wisps of black smoke.

Cordelia is very upset.

"He's lost. He belongs to the Lord of Windbreak now, and he'll sail *Messembra* from Windbreak evermore."

Cordelia believes that the *Messembra* will head back to Windbreak, there to meet with the sailors and pirates who are now to make Eiril's new crew. Cordelia knows that Frachier-knol has been one of the minor pirates on the sea, as he has only one or two large ships, and a handful of smaller ones. She is careful to avoid any remarks that might incriminate him in Eiril's abduction, and will argue that Tor hasn't *charmed* Eiril because he has never been able to learn that enchantment. If the party suggests that she knows quite a bit about minotaurs, she will grow silent for a couple of heartbeats. "Yes, I do. I was a spy once, and I was imprisoned on Kothas. I'd rather let the subject drop there."

If the party hesitates to make the next decision, one of the NPCs will insist that the remnants of Eiril's crew take action against their former captain, for vengeance, and more. If Eiril Rosewood is allowed to return to his old ways, and if a band of cut-throat minotaurs come under his expert command, he would easily be the most deadly pirate on the Blood Sea. He must be stopped.

Pursuing The Messembra

In the Sargas myths of Kothas and Mithas, Messembra was the only minotaur who valued the stealthy skills of thievery above the forthright competitions of the Circus. She was beautiful and quick-of-wit, but she had no taste for direct combat, choosing to deflect her opponents rather than meet their strengths with her own.

Many of the stories tell of her exploits against dwarf and human, her grace and skills foiling every enemy. It was said that Messembra was so quick, and her enemies such sluggards, that she could render any man immobile with but a kiss.

Her's was not a good end, however. She once stole from fellow minotaurs, indeed from the priests of Sargas. The priests asked for vengeance, and Sargas turned Messembra into a grotesque minotaur-faced monster, the first of the race of gorgons that roams the wilds of Kothas and beyond.



And so Frachier-knol named his ship *Messembra*, claiming admiration for her subtle natures. And when he found herbs that gave off peculiar smoke when burned—smoke that would petrify most woods—he incorporated those herbs into a bellows arrangement in her figurehead. (Her petrification gas cloud can be used once every two turns, spewing forth a ball of smoke 3" in diameter at a distance up to 4" away from the fore of the ship, in any direction up to 60 degrees away from dead ahead. Any wooden object in the gas cloud must make a successful saving throw vs. crushing blow to avoid being petrified. A petrified ship finds itself unable to shift with the waves and cracks under strain, taking on water and proceeding to sink.)

Eiril Rosewood now rests in an aft cabin, his hammock swaying with the waves, his eyes gazing blindly at the wood ceiling, silently bemoaning his decisions. The bull Frachier has tricked his crew, slain them. They came to rescue their captain, and now they are dead. As is Cordelia. Now that she is gone, Eiril realizes that he did, in fact, love her. He is Frachier-knol's guest and companion—at least as long as he stays useful to the old bull—but he is his own prisoner. Yes, he had indeed done something bold and adventuresome with his life. Eiril's eyes run with tears, and he makes no move to blot them.

Indeed, Frachier now sails home, the trip being more by current than by wind. *Messembra* can make the trip in about 16 hours. She is 45 feet long and just over one-third that in width. She has three masts, with riggings supporting small sails fore and aft. She has a Hull Value of 20 points. She is armed with three light ballistae per side, each loaded with iron-tipped bolts with harpoon lines attached. She carries a total crew of 20, with 15 of those minotaurs being available to board an enemy ship. Not included in the count are Frachier-knol (AC 4; MV 12"; FTR 9; hp 71, #AT 2 or 3/2; Dmg 2d4/1d4 or by weapon; THAC0 12; S18/77 I15 W10 D16 Cn16 Ch13; AL LE), who carries a huge spear into battle (treat as pike that inflicts 1d8 points of damage before Strength bonuses are figured in), or Tor-

hoch, who carries the same spells as he did in Jennison.

It is not difficult for *Will o' Wisp* to catch up with the *Messembra* within three hours, assuming pursuit begins soon after the *Heart of Justice's* survivors are rescued. Because ship-to-ship position is important in this fight, the following naval combat rules can be used.

Like a real combat, ship combat can take place on a hex grid. Each hex represents 3", or 90 feet.

Each round, a ship may move one hex for every mile it travels per hour. In this case, the *Messembra* moves a maximum of eight hexes per round, and the *Will o' Wisp* moves 11. Since the ships are so near to the Maelstrom, the currents south are strong. As such, the ships move 12" (four hexes) south due to the currents, over and above any other considerations. A ship may slow down or speed up to her maximum speed at an acceleration of one hex per round per round. Each ship has a Movement Class, much the same as aerial creatures. Most sailing ships are Class E, most rowing vessels are Class C. *Messembra* is Class D; *Will o' Wisp* is Class C.

However, Styrkunn is still unfamiliar with the workings of his ship. Each time he attempts a turn of greater than 30 degrees, he must roll 13 or better on 1d20. If the PCs helped with the sails on the trip from Jennison, Styrkunn receives a +3 bonus to his roll. Failure to make this roll indicates that the *Will o' Wisp* makes no such maneuver and sails straight for the rest of the round.

As far as Frachier-knol is concerned, the *Will o' Wisp* is a gift. He was angry when the new ship didn't show up at the ransom-payment, as he had intended to take her with him. But now she has come to follow him, with none but a pitiful crew of humans on board. As such he will not try to sink her, with either ballistae or petrification gas, unless *Will o' Wisp* is winning so handily that he has no other choice.

If the party wins, Eiril will surrender. If the DM decides Eiril feels he has a fighting chance to lure the party into a trap on Kothas, he will claim to have been drugged by some strange potion. He says that he is grateful to his crew for the res-

cue, and that he knows that Windbreak is now almost unguarded, a rich treasure waiting for the picking. His crew will believe him unless a PC successfully persuades (with a Charisma Check) the crew of Eiril's untrustworthiness.

If Eiril sees Cordelia on deck, his eyes widen with surprise, and then he cries with joy. He rushes to embrace her but then stops a few feet away. He there kneels and asks her forgiveness. If she'll take him back, he promises, he will be hers forever. She gently walks over to him and lifts his head, kissing his brow. Yes, she'll have him, but only if he never steps foot on Kothas or Mithas again. The party can get the full story, including Cordelia's background, after a time.

The *Messembra* may win the combat. If so, Eiril will insist that the survivors be picked up and imprisoned by the minotaurs. If Cordelia survives the attack, she will not look at Eiril as she is borne up into *Messembra's* hold, and neither will he look at her. The ship (or ships, if *Will o' Wisp* is merely captured rather than sunk) will continue to Kothas, there to dock at Windbreak.

Ignoring *Messembra*

Instead of immediately attacking the minotaur ship, the party might decide to head straight for Windbreak, take the place, and wait there for *Messembra* to arrive.

If the *Will o' Wisp* journeys at full sail, she should arrive at Windbreak about ten o'clock at night, a trip of just over 12 hours. Styrkunn can cut this time by sailing closer to the Maelstrom, but this is risky. If the trip takes 12 hours, the ship must make a roll of 2 or greater on 1d20. Failure to do so sends the *Will o' Wisp* deeper into the Maelstrom. For every 10 minutes saved, this saving throw is worsened by 1 point. For example, a trip of 10 hours would require a saving throw of 14 or better.

Kothas is a hard, foreboding land. The shores are all rocky, sometimes forming high cliffs of dull, impregnable stone. Farmlands produce yeika, a grain that is palatable only in beers. Great stone castles dot the island, reminders of hard



times of war. What little lands lie unclaimed are home to fierce monsters, such as giant lizards, an occasional squealer, and the more common gorgons.

The *Will o' Wisp* arrives at Kothas's shores at twilight. Night will have fallen completely by the time the ship reaches Windbreak, but the clouds are light, and it is bright enough to sail along the coastline at a safe distance. When the ship rounds the southern edge of the island, a magnificent 100-foot-high cliff rises darkly from the sea, crowned with distant torch-fires; the ship has reached Windbreak.

Windbreak is a small castle compound, with only a handful of buildings. (Space limitations require the DM to sketch out the compound, if such a task is necessary.) The buildings are surrounded by a great square wall, each side 50 feet high and five times that in length. There is one gate, on the east wall. The arms of Windbreak (Sable, an inescutcheon Or, a bordure striped gules and argent) flutter from each corner, and guards slowly make their way around the walls.

There are 45 armed minotaurs, both male and female, currently at Windbreak, as much of the castle's forces are out with *Messembra*. Also here are three wizards (2d, 4th, and 5th levels) who share a spell book containing *bind*, *blindness*, *clairvoyance*, *detect illusion*, *detect magic*, *feign death*, *hold person*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *paralyzation*, *run*, *sleep*, and *suggestion*. All but the 2d-level magic-user are Black-Robed and hence augmented under Nuitari's High Sanction. They have 5, 10, and 15 hit points, respectively.

Windbreak has two small catapults pointed toward the sea. Her port is a double-mouthed cave on the cliffs below her. Even at high tide, there is clearance for a 30-foot mast. There is a long spiral staircase, tunneled through rock centuries ago, that links the docks with the castle above.

There are currently two small ships (15 feet long, primarily built for oars, maximum speed five miles per hour, 7 points of Hull Value, crew of 10) in dock, and these will be launched (the process taking a full turn) if any hostile ship approaches

with enough warning. The crews of these small craft will attempt to board an enemy ship, rather than attack ship-to-ship.

If the *Will o' Wisp* approaches Windbreak from the sea, she will be spotted and attacked when she is 45" from the cliffs. If the ship clings to the shoreline, she has a 50% chance of going unnoticed, but a 25% chance of grounding on the harsh rocky coast. In this case, the party must either climb the cliff or swim into the caves, the latter being 500" from the ship.

Perhaps the party thought to take the black-and-gold banner from the gloomwing's island. If so, the guards at Windbreak assume that Frachier-knol is returning with *Will o' Wisp* as his prize. There are no attacks outside the port, but 30 minotaurs gather at the docks to welcome Frachier-knol, and they may be in for a surprise.

If the party defeats 40 of the minotaurs, the remaining eight surrender. The treasure at Windbreak is left up to the DM, although it is recommended that there be no more than 10,000 stl worth of gems and coins, and magic no more powerful than a *luckstone*, a collection of potions, and a couple of +1 weapons. *Messembra* enters harbor shortly before dawn. Frachier does not suspect anything out of the ordinary unless the PCs committed obvious damage to Windbreak. If *Messembra* is surprised, the battle is weighed in favor of the party, with Eiril and Cordelia playing their reunion scene as given earlier after the smoke clears.

The party may fail, being defeated by either the guards or the returning crew of the *Messembra*. If so, they will be stripped of weapons and obvious material components, and then locked away in cells to await their trial.

Other Options

Perhaps, after rescuing crew members from the gloomwing, the PCs decide to avoid an immediate fight. The *Will o' Wisp* is still somewhat strange to her short-shifted crew, and reinforcements might be in order.

If the party chooses this approach, they can indeed get more men and supplies in

Jennison (or whatever port city they choose). However, their opposition is stiffer once they reach Windbreak. They will have to contend with both the castle's defenses and *Messembra* simultaneously. Moreover, Eiril will have had a chance to meet with the crew and unite them, and his leadership bonuses will be in effect.

If the party has particularly strong reinforcements, say a couple of heavy warships and a few silver dragons, the DM might consider upping the opposition even more. This choice is the least heroic of the three options, and should be difficult.

The party might choose something completely different. The DM should not discourage this, but should allow the PCs to follow through on such plans perhaps with Stykunn voicing concern over any scheme that looks suicidal. The previous couple of pages should be used as a guide to the intentions and reactions of the major NPCs should the PCs attempt unexpected strategies.

In The Dungeons of Windbreak

If the party lost a combat with the minotaurs, they end up awaiting trial in the dungeons of Windbreak. Cordelia and any survivors of Eiril's crew are with them. PC magic-users and clerics are bereft of their spell books, material components, and *medallions of faith*, so spell recovery might be a challenge. After a few days, the Player Characters and Cordelia are brought into a great stone hall and led before the seat of Frachier-knol. Beside the Governor sits Eiril Rosewood, looking years older than he did in Jennison. His eyes dare not meet those of the party, and his head is bowed. The minotaur lord speaks:

"It is the tradition of my people to offer prisoners a fair chance at freedom, so that criminals who fail are convicted without question. You are now on trial. Do you understand?"

"You, Cordelia, have already lost your Circus. You were ready to kill yourself when I found you. You should be more grateful for your extended life, even if it has been in such a disquieting form."



At that, three minotaurs remove Cordelia. Eiril looks up with a tinge of panic.

"There is a maze carved into the cliff alongside the port below. At the end, you will find a gate, leading to the sea. Beyond that, you will find a ship, empty except for Captain Eiril's former crew. They are shackled to the mast and require you to free them. If you can get on board and do so, you are free to leave in peace. But to do so, you must navigate the maze and find the two keys that will unlock the gate.

"You will be given your possessions and prepared for the maze. Go now."

Frachier-knol turns toward his companion. "You needn't fear, my dread pirate." He withdraws a large golden key from his robes. "Without this, neither they nor the foul Cordelia will ever make it out of the maze."

As the minotaur laughs at this joke, Eiril's eyes grow wide, and his hand reaches for an invisible weight at his side.

The maze in the cliff is small but complex. It is four levels high. Each floor is 10 feet high, with a stone floor five feet thick between each level. There are hooks that might have held lanterns on the wall every 20 feet. The walls are riddled with tiny holes near the floor, and frequently there are five-foot diameter holes in the floors or ceilings, with short metal ladders riveted in place to facilitate access from one level to the next; success involves numerous trips up and down. See the accompanying map: each white dot indicates a ladder up; each black dot indicates a hole down; split dots indicate both.

This maze is not watertight, but has access to the ocean. As the PCs are led into the maze on the top floor, the tide is low and none of the levels are flooded. As time progresses, however, more and more of the maze fills with water. Every two turns (20 minutes), the water rises 15 feet, or one level. The DM is urged to pay strict attention to how much time the Player Characters spend searching through the maze. The DM should also emphasize the time constraints once they realize the peril. Characters who are mapping can only move at 6" per round.

There are a couple points of interest in the maze:

1: This marks the lair of a shambling mound: AC 0; MV 6"; HD 8; hp 59; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8; THAC0 12; SA Suffocation, SD spell immunities; weapons do only half damage; AL N. It cannot climb ladders, but it will pursue any characters it sees who remain on the same level or drop down levels.

2: Here is a brass chest, closed and locked. It is filled with very salty water. Inside is a key, one of the two needed to unlock the gate at the exit. The water is also contaminated with a contact poison. Should any character reach into the water, that character must save vs. poison. Failure indicates that the character is *slowed* for 1d4 turns.

3: Cordelia is here, chained to the wall and gagged. On a chain around her waist is another key, and there are two oversized keyholes side-by-side on the manacles that hold her. The manacles are positioned in such a way that they must be removed before the key can be taken.

This is a trap. Although a thief might well be able to detect (with a successful roll) that the manacles will explode (delivering 4d10 damage to anyone within 5") if the trap is triggered, a second roll must be made at 15% of the thief's normal chances to remove the device. It is designed so that only one key can open

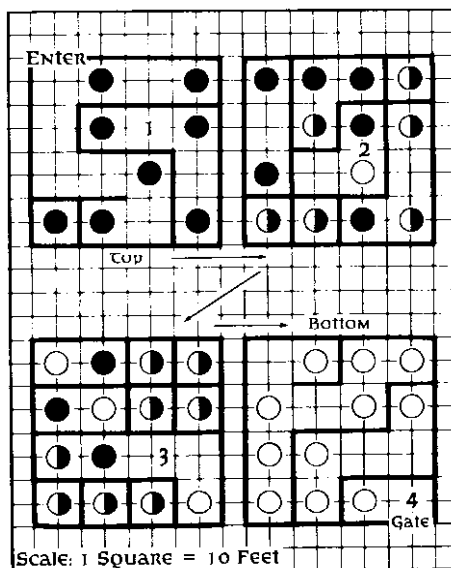
the locks, and that is the key that Frachier-knol kept with him.

Just as the party is about to attempt to pick the lock, or Cordelia's life is otherwise threatened by rushing water or desperate PCs with hacksaws, a commotion erupts on the topmost level of the maze. Within a minute, Eiril appears through the hole in the ceiling, his scimitar dripping bright red, his body decorated with mortal wounds. He falls to his knees, and a single gold key drops through to the party. "Cordelia," he whispers, his eyes glazing over. "Take care of Cord..." The gold key opens the locks in both manacles, and does not set off the explosion.

4: This is the gate to freedom. Its locks require both keys mentioned above, or it can be forced open with a successful *bend bars* roll.

Outside the gate, the PCs must swim 15" underwater before reaching the surface. And sure enough, a ship is waiting there.

However, there is one more trial the party must overcome. Frachier-knol waits on deck for the party to arrive. There he challenges one of the Player Characters, preferably a fighter, to a one-on-one combat. If the PC wins, they can all go free. If not, they will all die. If a PC does accept the minotaur's offer and wins the combat, he should receive double the normal experience points for defeating such a foe. If Frachier-knol wins, he does indeed try to kill the rest of the party. Whatever the results of the combat, the adventure is over. Whether they both survived or not, the story of Eiril and Cordelia now sails beyond the knowledge of the Player Characters.



Eyes of the Minotaur

This adventure is designed for 3-4 characters of levels 3-5. It takes place after the Cataclysm during the time when the factions of Krynn are organizing for the War of the Lance. With minor modifications, it can also occur after the conclusion of the war when Krynn is rebuilding.

The adventure begins with the PCs aboard a small vessel approaching the southwestern coast of the island of Mithas. They may be on a reconnaissance mission for their commander, they may be returning from diplomatic talks in Karthy, or they may be fishing for dragon tuna, a delicacy rumored to dwell only in the waters near Mithas. Exactly why the PCs are in the area is left up to the DM, depending on the requirements of his campaign.

Player Background

On a warm day with a cloudless sky and gentle winds, the PCs are startled by the sight of a large warship heading in their direction. The ship is moving fast, and the PCs' small craft has no chance to escape. They have little choice but to await the arrival of the warship.

As the warship nears, the PCs see it is manned by minotaurs. That usually means trouble in these parts, as the minotaurs from Mithas and Kothas are notorious for their brutal acts of piracy. However, these minotaurs appear to be more curious than hostile, carefully eyeing the PCs and their vessel as they pull alongside.

The minotaur commander demands to come aboard. Before the PCs can answer, the commander orders his crew to put a gangplank in place so he can cross. If the PCs are guests on a chartered vessel, the captain and crew throw up their hands in surrender. Resistance is clearly useless. There are easily 40 minotaurs on the warship, and though they aren't overtly hostile, they are heavily armed.

The commander and eight minotaur crewmen board the PCs' craft. After a quick look around, the commander passes his finger in front of each PC's face. "Can you see that?" he asks brusquely. When the commander is assured that they can, either by their

assent or by the movement of their eyes, he orders them all to be taken aboard the minotaur ship. If the PCs resist, the commander threatens to kill them on the spot. "There's plenty more where you came from," he growls. The minotaurs display whatever force is necessary to convince the PCs to obey them.

Once aboard the minotaur ship, the PCs are chained to the deck. The commander takes another look at their eyes, grunts his approval, then leaves them with six minotaur guards armed with huge axes.

The minotaur ship sets sail to Mithas. The minotaurs ignore the PCs for the duration of the voyage.

Dungeon Master Background

As news of impending war spread through Krynn, the minotaurs of Mithas mobilized their forces to align with whichever factions promised the greatest rewards of fortune and power. Most of the minotaurs favored the Dragon Highlords. The residents of Thorador, a village located on the southwestern coast of Mithas, also favored the side of evil, but they were largely left out of the planning. This was partly because Thorador was located in an isolated area, but mainly because Thoradorians were considered to be an inferior class of minotaur, lazier and less intelligent than the rest of the Mithas population.

Lord Myca, the Thoradorian leader, was convinced that Thorador had a lot to offer the Highlords. The Thoradorians may not be the brightest minotaurs to walk the face of Krynn, but they were fearless fighters and excellent shipbuilders. A single Thoradorian-made ship could hold a crew of 200. So what if it took them a year to build one?

With the stakes getting higher, dissension was building in Thorador. Ma Mable and her three sons had challenged Lord Myca's authority, saying Thorador would be better off building smaller, faster ships than the big ones that took so long to put together. Though the repulsive Mable family members were usually shunned, many conceded that they might have a point.

With even less work than usual getting done and the possibility of an alliance with the Highlords increasing every day, Lord Myca formally challenged Ma Mable and her boys to an arena duel to the death, the traditional method of settling conflicts in Thorador. The winner would rule Thorador and decide what type of ships would be built to impress the Highlords. Ma Mable accepted, and a date was set.

Lord Myca was confident of a victory in the arena, but just to be on the safe side, he began a special prayer ritual to ask for strength and cunning. Unfortunately, Lord Myca misunderstood the ritual's directions and he stared at the brightest star in the *daytime* sky. After a few hours of this, Lord Myca became totally blind.

In spite of Lord Myca's accident, Thorador law stated that the arena duel had to go on as planned. The law allowed for each challenger to be assisted by up to four lackeys, but as news of Lord Myca's affliction spread, no volunteers were forthcoming—assisting a blind fighter in a duel to the death was suicide.

Lord Myca was furious. He could scarcely order his fellow Thoradorians to fight with him—after all, who knew which ones might betray him to Ma Mable? He dismissed them all as cowards and said he would find his own assistants. To placate him, his aides offered to help. Mighty warriors often sailed the seas near Mithas. An outsider would perhaps be more suitable (and, thought his aides, more expendable). Having no real choice, Lord Myca agreed. While his aides took a ship to search for seafaring warriors, Lord Myca ordered his gnome slaves to come up with something to help with his blindness.

With their discovery of the PCs, Lord Myca's aides believe they have found the perfect lackeys for the upcoming duel.

Overview of Thorador

Thorador is a primitive coastal village of about 600 minotaurs. It is cut off from the rest of Mithas by a mountain range and a dense forest. Thorador is seldom visited by traders or travelers, as it has little of value to trade and its residents



aren't particularly noted for their hospitality.

The main industry of Thorador is ship-building. Thoradorian warships are noted for their size and seaworthiness, but similar ships are available elsewhere on Mithas that are cheaper to purchase. Thoradorian ships also take much more time to build, thanks to the Thoradorians' low tolerance for work. Thorador has a large military, which has been increased recently in anticipation of the impending war. It's impossible to go anywhere night or day in Thorador without encountering military patrols.

Most of the buildings are crude stone structures or caves dug into the mountains. Owing to the minotaurs' love of labyrinths, many of the homes contain winding passages leading from one room to the next.

The most prominent building in the village is the home of Lord Myca, which resembles a stone castle. Barely 20 feet high with only one large room, it is a pathetic reproduction of the truly magnificent castles occupied by minotaur leaders in the more prosperous area of Mithas.

The following are the statistics for a typical minotaur soldier found in Thorador. Use these statistics whenever you need minotaurs in this adventure. Feel free to vary the hit points, weapons, and treasure, within the guidelines given in the *Monster Manual*.

Minotaur: AC 6; MV 12"; HD 6+3; hp 38; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4 or 1d4/1d10 (huge axe); THAC0 13; SD surprised only on 1, track prey by scent with 50% accuracy; AL CE. Carries 20 stl.

Incarceration

When the warship docks at Thorador, the PCs are thoroughly searched and their weapons, valuables, and other gear are stuffed into a large leather bag. The PCs are released from their chains and are then taken at axe point into the city. As before, their protests and questions are ignored.

The PCs are herded to a hillside cave, a minotaur peasant dwelling now used as a

prison. A guard opens the large wooden door, shoves the PCs inside, then slams and locks the door behind them. Four minotaurs remain on guard outside the cave. If necessary, there are plenty of other guards in the area to prevent escape attempts.

The main room in the cave is roughly circular, about 25 feet in diameter with a 10-foot ceiling. The floor, ceiling, and walls are made of packed earth. In one corner is a pile of straw used for sleeping. The only furniture is a stone table and four logs used for chairs. A pile of stones in odd shapes is on the table. Any PC who makes an Intelligence Check on 1d20 recognizes the stones as pieces of a puzzle (minotaurs are fond of puzzles and games). Assembling the pieces correctly forms a model of a warship.

There are two winding 10-foot passages in the back of the room, each leading to a smaller chamber. One chamber contains a large stone basin, used by the minotaurs for bathing. It is filled with about a foot of muddy water. The other chamber contains a shallow pit filled with gravel and a few dried sprigs of mint. This is used by the minotaurs as a litter box. Any PC who fishes around in the litter box and fails a Constitution Check on 1d20 will be sick to his stomach for 10 minutes after discovering the "treasures" buried there.

The PCs may fill the next few uneventful hours by resting, playing with the puzzle, or using the litter box.

Three Visits

Just after sundown, the PCs have three visits to their cave. The visits occur in the following sequence, one per hour.

First Visit

The cave door slams open and two minotaurs carrying large axes and wearing military uniforms stomp in. A third, larger minotaur lingers outside, hidden in the shadows. "Check them out!" barks the large minotaur. "Time's wasting!"

The minotaur in the shadows is Lord

Myca. The other two are his personal guards. Use the minotaur soldier statistics for the guards.

Lord Myca (minotaur): hp 50; Dmg 2d4 or 1d4/2d6 (extremely huge axe); all other statistics as for minotaur soldier.

The minotaur guards rush to the PCs and examine their eyes with the same finger test used on the ship. If the PCs resist, additional guards are summoned. All PC questions and protests are ignored. When the guards are finished, they nod approval at Lord Myca, temporarily forgetting his condition. When Lord Myca says nothing, the embarrassed guards announce loudly, "Uh...they're fine, sire." "Leave them!" bellows Lord Myca. They all leave the cave, slamming the door behind them.

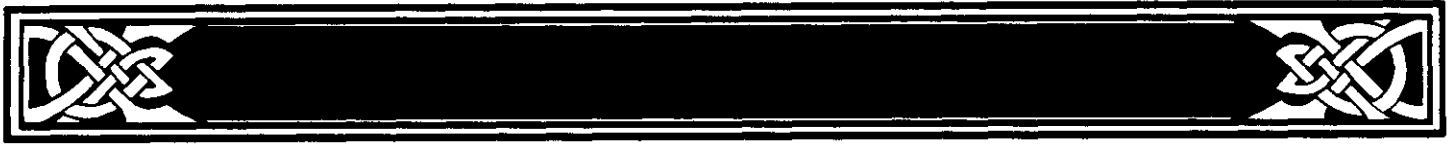
Second Visit

The door slams open again. The two minotaur guards have returned, this time escorting two three-foot-tall men with scraggly red beards and dressed in dirty white coats stuffed with wood scraps, papers, and other junk. The third minotaur has also returned, remaining in the shadows as before. He barks at them to hurry.

The two little men are Parmelion and Zast, twin gnomes kept as slaves by Lord Myca. The gnomes are responsible for whatever crude technology is present in Thorador.

Gnomes (2): AC 5; MV6"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; THAC0 19; AL N

The gnomes produce long pieces of string marked at regular intervals. They use the strings to take measurements of the PCs' necks, mumbling to themselves while they record the figures. If the PCs don't cooperate, the guards threaten them, summoning more guards if necessary. If the PCs address the gnomes, the gnomes will begin to answer, only to be cut off by a whack in the head from a guard. When the gnomes finish, they



nod to the guards, and everyone leaves.

Third Visit

The sounds of scratching come from the floor in the corner. The earth is moving, as if something is digging its way in.

A moment later, a small head with pointed ears pops out of a newly created hole. A smiling figure holding a silver shovel greets you. "Hi, neighbors!" he says brightly, struggling to pull himself out of the hole. "How about a hand?"

This is Bennybeck Cloudberry, a 15-year-old kender. Benny is another captive of the minotaurs, kept imprisoned in the cave next door.

Bennybeck Cloudberry, 2d-level kender thief: AC 8; MV 9"; hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (pick axe); THAC0 20; S10, I10, W9, D14, Cn14, Ch11; AL N

Equipment: Pick axe (Dmg 1d6), leather armor, spade of excavation, large sack (contents described later)

Abilities: *pick pockets* 40%, *open doors* 34%, *find/remove traps* 30%, *move silently* 31%, *hide in shadows* 30%, *hear noise* 14%, *climb walls* 71%

Kender talents: *taunt* (save vs. spell or attack wildly for 1d10 rounds at -2 to hit and + 2 to Armor Class), *fearlessness*, +4 on saves vs. spell and poison, determine direction 50%, surprise on 1-4 on 1d6 when not in armor and alone.

Once out of the hole, the kender extends his hand in friendship and cheerily introduces himself. "Just call me Benny!" After the introductions, Benny makes himself comfortable on the floor, then eagerly peppers the PCs with questions. "Where are you all from? How long you been here? Isn't that Lord Myca something? Can I have that puzzle when you're done with it?"

The PCs may answer if they wish, but they're likely to have questions of their own. Benny happily shares anything he knows. He tells them he is a member of the Creat clan, born on the east coast of Nordmaar. Benny idolized his grandfa-

ther, a renowned explorer and prospector who claimed to have once discovered a mine of pure silver. Benny longed to follow in his grandfather's footsteps, and a month ago, he ran away from home to do some prospecting of his own. "I know my grandfather wanted me to go," he says, holding up the silver shovel. "Otherwise, why would he have left this in plain sight right under his bed?"

Benny stowed away on a ship, not knowing it belonged to the minotaurs of Thorador. The minotaurs found him and locked him in a cave until they decided what to do with him. "It's kind of boring, but it's not bad," says Benny. "Besides, I've had time to some prospecting."

Benny demonstrates his *spade of excavation* by quickly scooping a shallow hole in the floor. (The spade of excavation is a variation of a *spade of colossal excavation*. It is four feet long and can be used by any character with a Strength of 10 or higher. It can excavate one cubic yard of normal earth in one round. After every 10 rounds, the user must rest for five rounds.) Benny has dug a few tunnels from his cave, but hasn't been able to go very far due to thick layers of bedrock.

Benny knows a fair amount of what's going on in Thorador, even though he doesn't quite understand it all. Benny knows that Lord Myca is the leader and somebody's mother is out to get him. They're going to have to fight it out, and the winner gets to be the new chief. But something happened to Lord Myca that made him go blind. "He's had his gnomes working on it, but I don't know how he's going to fight a duel when he can't see." If the PCs mention that they have been visited by the gnomes or if they talk about the eyesight tests the guards gave them, Benny says thoughtfully, "Hmmm...sounds like Lord Myca has something in mind for you. That should be interesting."

Benny doesn't know exactly what the fight's all about, but he has an idea how the duel works. He says that the opponents are locked inside an underground arena and fight to the death. "I guess that's what they do for fun around here," he says, adding matter-of-factly, "If

that's what they're going to do with you guys, I'd say you've got a problem."

If the PCs ask for help, Benny shrugs his shoulders. "I'd like to help, but I don't know what I can do." Because of the underground rock, they cannot dig too far, and besides, there are guards everywhere. If asked, Benny dumps the contents of his bag on the floor. The bag contains a dagger, a flask with two doses of *potion of water breathing*, a cloth pouch with 60 stl, 20 feet of rope, a flask of oil, a tinder box, an iron spike, three chunks of granite vaguely shaped like faces (no value), and two white pearls (100 stl each). "Most of this stuff was just lying around. Can you believe such carelessness?" If they promise to return them when they're through, Benny says the PCs are welcome to any of these items, but doubts if the minotaurs will allow them to take anything into the arena. "They always frisk you first. I'm pretty sure about that."

Benny tells them he dug a tunnel in his cave that leads outside. Again, because of the guards and the underground rock, there aren't many places he can get to, but if they like, Benny can show them the arena, providing they're quiet about it. If it doesn't occur to the PCs, Benny suggests they take his bag of items and hide them in the arena so the PCs can get to them if indeed they wind up there later.

It's up to the PCs whether or not they take Benny's suggestion. If they decide to stay put, skip to the "Day of Decision" section. However, if they wish to follow Benny and get a preview of the arena, go to the "Thorador by Night" section that follows.

Thorador By Night

If the PCs decide to go with Benny, they squeeze through the hole in the floor, widening it with the *spade of excavation* if necessary. The hole leads to Benny's cave, which is virtually identical to their own. Benny moves aside a pile of hay to reveal another hole, then beckons the PCs to follow, telling them they need to be back by sunrise when the guards check on them.

The tunnel winds underground for



about 50 yards, then emerges into a field of weeds. Benny tells them the arena is about 100 yards ahead; they can get there unseen by sneaking through the field.

The route to the arena is relatively safe, but Benny warns that attempts to explore other areas are risky; the longer they snoop around, the more likely it is that they'll be discovered by patrolling minotaur guards. If the PCs insist, here are some other places they could explore, along with the consequences of disregarding Benny's warnings.

The Village

The weed field is about 100 yards from the main part of Thorador, a collection of crude stone buildings and caves. Each dwelling is guarded by minotaurs; the outskirts are constantly patrolled by the military at all hours of the day and night. If they insist on proceeding, the PCs will be recaptured by minotaur guards when they come within 50 yards of the village. After a severe beating, the PCs are returned to their cave. The surrounding

wilderness is likewise patrolled by minotaurs, allowing no possibility of escape.

Lord Myca's Castle

Lord Myca's stone castle is on a hill overlooking Thorador and can be seen from the field. It is possible to get there without going through the village, but the castle is heavily guarded at all times. Even coming within a few yards of it guarantees a return trip to the cave. The gnomes' stone shack is adjacent to the castle and is also heavily guarded.

The Shipyard

The shipyard is about a mile from the weed field in the direction of the ocean. All of Thorador's ships are docked here, and a huge warship is always under construction. The PCs could conceivably avoid the village to sneak here, but the shipyard is overrun with minotaur workers and guards, laboring around the clock in anticipation of the coming war. The recapture of the PCs is assured if they come here.

The arena





The PCs have no trouble following Benny through the field to the arena. The entrance to the arena is a wooden door in the west side of a mountain, about 30 yards from where the weed field ends. An obscenely overweight minotaur guards the door. The minotaur is picking bananas from a large stalk and stuffing them whole into his mouth.

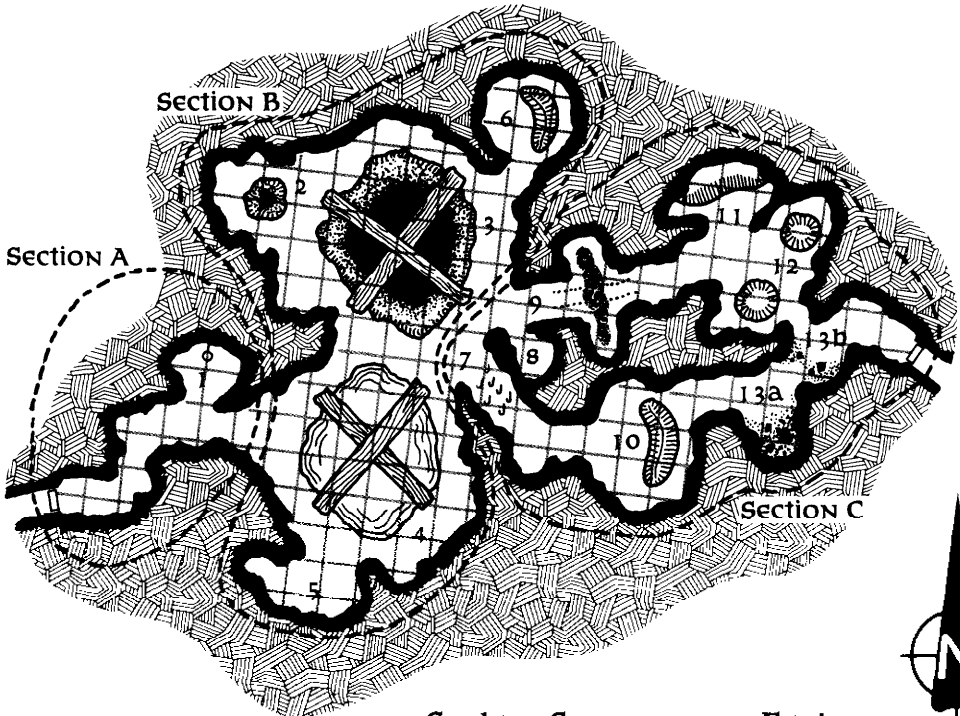
Korus (minotaur guard): MV 6"; hp 45; all other statistics as for minotaur soldier (differences due to Korus's bulk).

Korus isn't much of a guard, but there's not much in the arena worth guarding. Benny offers to *taunt* Korus and lure him into the weeds so the PCs can take care of him. Unless the PCs prefer a different plan, Benny approaches Korus and insults him. ("Is that your belly or a *dragon orb*?") The enraged Korus chases Benny into the weeds where the PCs can use thick branches for clubs (dmg 1d4). Korus fights to the death.

The simple lock on the arena door poses no problems for Benny or any PC with appropriate skills.

The Arena

-  Boards
-  Water
-  Door
-  Hooks
-  Ring
-  Pit
-  Crevasse
-  Sinkhole
-  Rubble
-  Ledge
-  Cinder
-  Clear Area





Notes on The arena

The arena is a natural mountain cavern with a few modifications added by the minotaurs. It is used to resolve differences of opinion in Thorador. There are two entrances to the arena, one on each side of the mountain. The opponents and their lackeys enter from opposite sides and duel it out until only one faction is left alive.

There are two Encounter Keys for the arena. The first Encounter Key describes the arena in its normal, empty state. Just before a duel, the minotaur referees give the arena a thorough check and make a few additions so the duel will be more interesting. The second Encounter Key describes the arena as it appears after these preparations have been made.

Refer to the Encounter Key for the unprepared arena when the PCs sneak in at night. Refer to the Encounter Key for the prepared arena on the day of the duel.

encounter key: unprepared arena

The arena comprises several passages and caverns. The passages are about 10 feet wide and the ceilings are about 10 feet high unless otherwise indicated. The walls, ceilings, and floors are made of packed earth. If the PCs want to hide items, they can bury them anywhere in the arena.

There are torches in the walls about every 60 feet, but since the arena isn't prepared for a duel, the torches aren't lit.

1. Wall Chains

This alcove has a single iron ring imbedded in the wall. The ring is six inches in diameter.

The iron ring is imbedded firmly in the wall; all the PCs pulling together cannot budge it. If the PCs examine the ground near the ring, they see scratches in the dirt.

The minotaurs often secure a wild animal here to annoy the duelist entering from this side of the arena.

2. hole

There is a five-foot-diameter hole in the ground in this alcove. Mounds of dirt surround the hole.

An anhkheg burrowed into the arena recently; this is its hole. The anhkheg feasted on the remains of a dead duelist and is patiently waiting for another. Luckily for the party, the anhkheg rests at night on a ledge 30 feet down in the hole and won't attack unless disturbed.

Anhkheg: AC 2 (underside 4); MV 12" (6"); HD 4; hp 27; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6 (+ 1d4); THAC0 15; SA squirt acid once every six hours for 8d4 points of damage, half damage if victim makes saving throw; AL N

Naturally, Benny is curious about the hole and tells the PCs it might be a silver mine like the one his grandfather talked about. If Benny or any PC starts down the hole, loose rocks and dirt fall in and wake the anhkheg. Likewise, any object tossed down the hole also wakes it. Four rounds after it awakens, the anhkheg clatters out of the hole to attack. It attempts to drag a PC into its hole and will fight to the death. If the anhkheg is killed, the PCs may search its hole to find the remains of a former duelist. Among the remains are a *battle axe* +1 and a flask with two doses of *potion of healing*.

3. Open Pit

A circular pit about 35 feet in diameter and 20 feet deep is crossed by two unsecured wooden planks, each about five feet wide. The ceiling here is 40 feet high.

The minotaurs sometimes put dangerous creatures in this pit so the duelists can toss each other in. The planks can be used as walkways. Since the arena isn't prepared for a duel, the pit is empty.

4. Water Pit

This pit is also 35 feet in diameter and 20 feet deep, but this one is filled with murky sea water. It is also crossed by two unsecured wooden planks.

This pit is connected to a passage that leads to the ocean. A bout a year ago, an octopus swam through the passage and took up residence here. The minotaurs left it alone, as it added another nice touch for the duelists. The octopus is only active during the day and is currently asleep on a shelf of rocks 20 feet beneath the surface.

Octopus: AC 7; MV 3" // 12" ; HD 8; hp 40; #AT 7; Dmg 1d4(x6)/2db; THAC0 12; SA constriction for 2d4 points of damage; SD ink cloud; AL NE

Unless a PC enters the water, the octopus stays asleep. When alert, the octopus attacks viciously. The octopus can anchor itself near the surface and reach out a distance of 10 feet with its tentacles.

5. alcove

This alcove is empty. When the party nears it, Benny scratches in the loose dirt to determine how easy it would be to dig through. If the PCs ask what he's doing, Benny says, "Oh, nothing. Just looking." Benny offers no explanation beyond this.

As explained in the Prepared Arena Encounter Key, this is where Benny reappears while the duel is in progress. This is also where one of Ma's sons hides.

6. Crevasse

This area contains a crevasse nearly 20 feet long. It appears to be bottomless.

The crevasse is easy to avoid, but it does pose a hazard to the careless. A character who stands near the edge of the crevasse without taking precautions (such as holding on to a fellow PC) has a 1 on 1d20 chance of falling in. Falling in the bottomless crevasse should be considered fatal (unless the character has the means to fly or levitate).

As explained in the Prepared Arena



Encounter Key, this is where one of Ma's sons hides.

7. hooks

About two dozen hooks are attached to the ceiling in this passage. The hooks are made of iron and are about six inches long.

The minotaurs sometimes hang objects or creatures from these hooks to further add to the fun of the duelists.

8. alcove

This area has no special significance prior to the duel, but as explained in the Prepared Arena Encounter Key, it is where one of Ma's sons hides.

9. tinder

The floor here is covered with several inches of wood chips, twigs, and other kindling. The area smells of oil.

If the PCs examine the material, they confirm that the kindling has been soaked with oil. Before a duel, the minotaur referees usually light the kindling to create a wall of fire, hindering the movement of the duelist entering from the east.

10. crevasse

This crevasse is similar to the one in area 6, with the same chances of falling in. Note that it blocks the passage heading east. Many a duelist has ended his life in this crevasse.

11. ledge

A rock ledge occupies nearly half the space of this alcove. The 20' x 8' ledge is perfectly flat and is about eight feet from the floor. The ceiling is 15 feet high.

This area has no special significance before the duel. As explained in the Prepared Arena Encounter Key, it is used as a hiding place by Ma Mable.

12. sinkholes

This alcove is about 20 feet high. Near the north and south walls are circular areas 10 feet in diameter that have partially sunk into the earth.

The sunken areas are sinkholes. Any character near the edge of sinkhole has a 1 on 1d20 chance of falling in unless precautions are taken. The sinkholes are 20 feet deep. Those falling in suffer 2d6 points of damage.

13a. Rocky area

There is a large pile of rocks towering to the ceiling in this alcove. Smaller pieces of rubble litter the floor in the passageway.

A few months ago, the minotaurs brought in this rock to build pillars in the passageway that duelists could use to hide behind. The plan was abandoned when it was decided the project would take too much work. The rocks are now occasionally used by duelists as weapons (dmg 1d4).

Area 136 has no significance before the duel. As explained in the Prepared Arena Key, this is where Ma and her sons block the passageway.

getting Back

If the PCs linger too long in the arena, Benny reminds them that minotaur guards will be checking their caves for them at dawn. Also, the minotaur referees will soon be coming to the arena to prepare it for the duel.

By taking the same route and leaving before sunrise, the PCs have no trouble getting back to their cave. If they drag their feet or insist on taking a detour, however, minotaur guards spot them and, after a beating, escort them back.

day of decision

Just after dawn, six minotaur guards burst into the PCs' cave. While four of them keep an eye on the PCs for sudden moves, the other two fill the feeding trough with raw fish, mushy bananas,

and dried seaweed. The minotaurs then back out of the cave and slam the door behind them. Although it smells awful, the food is actually quite nourishing, and the PCs may eat their fill if they wish.

An hour later, the six guards return. "Let's go!" the biggest one orders gruffly. "And don't give us no trouble!" The guards herd the PCs at axe point out the door, giving them a hard shove if they don't move fast enough.

The PCs are directed through a back street of the village, then toward a mountain range that borders a dense forest. If the PCs made a trip to the arena at night, they recognize the area.

About 200 minotaurs are gathered near the west entrance to the arena. They are clearly in a festive mood, guzzling flasks of wine, chewing on roast badger, and entertaining each other with vulgar minotaur jokes. A lot of money is changing hands as the minotaurs place bets on the outcome of today's duel (odds are running about 5 to 1 against Lord Myca). If the PCs search the crowd for Benny, he is nowhere in sight.

The minotaurs eye the PCs curiously when they approach. Some of the minotaurs nudge each other, then bellow in laughter. One of them flings a badger bone at a randomly chosen PC.

The crowd parts for Lord Myca and his entourage as they make their way through the crowd towards the PCs. The entourage includes six personal attendants and Parmelion and Zast; the gnomes are struggling with armloads of chains and shackles. Lord Myca carries a large battle axe and wears a red cloak and iron eye patches. An attendant is guiding him by the arm.

A murmur ripples through the crowd as Lord Myca approaches the PCs—can these be the ones to attend him in the duel? As the PCs can clearly hear, the odds against Lord Myca quickly rise to 20 to 1.

Lord Myca snarls at the crowd as two minotaurs serving as referees frisk the PCs for weapons or any other items they have on them. Thanks to their keen senses, the minotaurs have a 95% chance of finding any items the PCs have concealed.

No sooner do the referees complete the



search than a huge female minotaur puffing a green cigar pushes her way through the crowd. Three shorter minotaurs swagger alongside her. The female brandishes a large axe, the others have swords.

This is Ma Mable and her sons, Strout, Dorodus, and Reastee. The family is repulsive even by Thoradorian standards. Ma, who smokes pungent cigars made from dried strangle weed, had her boys altered at birth to make them even more intimidating. Strout's hide, treated with secret herb salves, is green and leathery and gives off an aroma like sour vinegar, detectable from a distance of 15 feet. Dorodus had his teeth filed into sharp points. He cannot close his mouth completely and drools uncontrollably. Reastee's horns secrete poison mucous that constantly drips down his horns and cakes on his face.

Ma Mabel (minotaur): hp 48; Dmg 2d4 or 1d4/2d6 (huge axe); SA smoke cloud from strangle weed cigar, saving throw vs. poison or dmg 1d4; all other statistics as for minotaur soldier

Strout (minotaur teenager): AC 4 (due to treated hide); MV 12" ; HD 4+3; hp 30; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4 or 1d4/1d6 (short sword); THAC0 15; AL CE

Dorodus (minotaur teenager): AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+3; hp 28; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4 or 2d4 (razor teeth)/1d6 (short sword); THAC0 15; AL CE

Reastee (minotaur teenager): AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+3; hp 26; Dmg 2d4 or 1d4/1d6 (short sword); THAC0 15; SA poison horn, saving throw vs. poison or dmg 1d8; AL CE

Lord Myca quickly sniffs out the presence of Ma Mable. "Pig!" he snarls. "I'll use your horns for fish hooks when this is done!" "And I'll use your hide to line my latrine," shoots back Ma. "Except that'd make it stink worse than it already does!" Ma and the boys howl in laughter. She motions for them to follow her. They turn away and head around the mountain to the arena entrance on the east side.

"Twenty minutes!" shouts a referee.

Lord Myca snaps at the gnomes to hurry. The gnomes fit thick iron shackles around the necks of the PCs and lock them tightly. Each shackle is connected by a five-foot chain to a large iron ring. The PCs will lead Lord Myca through the arena by this ring. Lord Myca holds the ring in one hand, secured with leather straps tightly around his wrist, and holds his axe in the other. Each PC is armed with a short sword (dmg 1d6).

When 20 minutes have passed, the referees pull open the arena door. Lord Myca rattles the chains to get the PCs to go in. The crowd cheers as the door closes behind them. The doors will remain closed until one side has eliminated the other.

Staging The duel

To stage the duel, first review the changes in the arena explained below in the Prepared Arena Encounter Key. Details of the battle, including Ma's strategy and the likely sequence of events, are explained after the Encounter Key.

ENCOUNTER key: Prepared arena

Just after dawn, the minotaur referees prepared the arena by lighting all the torches, cleaning up debris, and installing a few surprises to make the duel more interesting. If the PCs visited the arena the night before and set any obvious traps, such as digging a pit or setting up a trip wire, these have been removed. However, any items or weapons they buried or otherwise hid are still where they put them.

Ma bribed the guards at the east door to let her in 15 minutes early. She and her boys took advantage of this extra time to make a few more changes. They are now hiding, hoping to ambush Lord Myca and the PCs.

1. Wall Chain

A giant porcupine has been chained to the wall here. The 20-foot chain is long enough to allow the porcupine to block

the passage if it wants to.

Giant porcupine: AC 5; MV 6"; HD 6; hp 26; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; THAC0 13; SA shoots 1d8 quills at 30-foot range, Dmg 1d4 per quill; SD 1d4 quills defensive attack as response to any attack within six feet; AL N

The porcupine views all intruders as threats and attacks viciously. If it loses half its hit points, it retreats into the alcove. Against the north wall of the alcove is a dead minotaur with dozens of quills stuck in him. This is one of the minotaur referees; chaining up the porcupine posed a few problems. On his body are 25 stl and a huge axe (dmg 1d10).

2. hole

Unless the PCs have already killed it, the anhkheg is alert and hungry. It scrambles out and attacks any character, including minotaurs, who comes within five feet of its hole.

3. Open Pit

The minotaur referees have dumped hundreds of wriggling yellow centipedes into this pit. The centipedes cannot crawl out. Characters who fall or are thrown into the pit have a 90% chance per round of being bitten. If bitten, the player must roll a saving throw vs. poison. Failure results in 2d4 points of damage, success results in 1d4 points of damage.

4. Water Pit

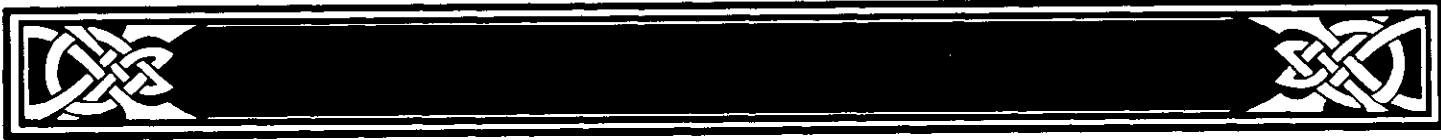
Assuming the PCs haven't killed it, the octopus is alert, clinging to a rock ledge about 10 feet below the surface. If the water is disturbed, the octopus swims to the surface, anchors itself to the side, and attacks.

5. alcove

Dorodus is hiding here. This is also where Benny turns up later.

6. Crevasse

Reastee is hiding here.



7. hooks

The minotaur referees have tied poisonous snakes to these hooks. The snakes are tied by their tails, and their heads dangle about two feet from the floor. Though the snakes are writhing and hissing, they pose no threat unless a character blunders into them. A saving throw vs. poison must then be made; failure results in 2d6 points of damage, success results in 1d4 points of damage. Note that most characters can crawl under the snakes without harm, but full-sized minotaurs and other large characters won't be able to.

8. alcove

Strout is hiding here.

9. tinder

The minotaur referees set fire to the oily tinder, but Ma and her sons have already put out some of the flames (the area between the dotted lines on the map) so they could get through the passage. High flames still flicker to the ceiling on either side of the clear area.

10. crevasse

There is nothing different here.

11. ledge

Ma Mable is hiding here on the ledge. She is against the north wall, concealed in the shadows.

12. sinkholes

There is nothing different here.

13. Rocky area

Ma Mable and her sons carried rocks from 13a to build a wall at 13b. The rock wall extends to the ceiling, blocking the passage.

Ma Mable's Strategy

For the DM's reference, the map is divided into three sections. Section A includes area 1, Section B includes areas 2-6, and Section C includes areas 7-13.

Ma is hidden in area 11, and her sons are hidden in areas 5, 6, and 8. Because of their head start, the Mable family knows what's in every area (with one exception—they don't know about the anhkheg in area 2). After Lord Myca and the PCs have been softened up by the porcupine in Section A, the three sons will attempt to ambush them from at least two sides in Section B. Assuming the sons don't finish the PCs off, the sons will attempt to lure them into Section C where Ma will join them to complete the job.

Lord Myca's Strategy

Lord Myca is a fearless fighter. Although he isn't particularly abusive to the PCs, he won't hesitate to whack them with the flat of his axe (1 point of damage) if they move too slowly or don't obey him. Even though he's blind, Lord Myca's keen senses alert him to most dangers. He can sense animal life (such as the porcupine) from 20 feet away. He can track by scent with 50% accuracy, with the accuracy increased to 80% for the smelly Mable family.

In melee combat, he swings his battle axe wildly in the general direction of his target, attacking with a -4 penalty. Unless the PCs are specifically keeping an eye on him, there is an equal chance that Lord Myca will hit a random PC instead of his intended target. Lord Myca always fights to the death.

Because they are chained to Lord Myca, the PCs are limited in their ability to move. The intricate gnome locks cannot be undone by any ordinary means. At no time will Lord Myca voluntarily let them go, although the PCs are free to attack Lord Myca if they wish. If the PCs turn on him, Lord Myca fights back as outlined above.

The Battle

Although there is no telling exactly what the PCs will do, the battle is most likely to occur in a sequence of four stages as explained below. Feel free to modify this sequence in response to the actions of the PCs. Remember that the battle will continue until only one side is left alive.

1. Section a

All the PCs need to do here is get past the porcupine. Lord Myca will warn them about "some kind of forest animal ahead" when they're within 20 feet of it. If the PCs kill the porcupine, Lord Myca won't want to waste time searching the minotaur body, but he can be convinced if the PCs give him a good reason (such as acquiring another weapon).

2. Section B

As the party leaves the passage from Section A, Lord Myca will sniff the air and bellow, "They're in here! Where are they?" It is up to the PCs to decide where to go. If they hesitate, Lord Myca shouts at them to get moving, swatting them with the flat of his axe if necessary.

Regardless of which way they decide to go, they'll have to pass near the pool in area 4. As soon as they do, Strout races out of area 8, rips a handful of snakes from the hooks in area 7, and flings them into the pool. The snakes splash into the water and alert the octopus, which immediately surfaces to attack any characters within 10 feet of the pool. The octopus remains near the surface for the remainder of the battle, ready to attack anyone who comes near. The snakes slither harmlessly away into cracks in the cavern walls.

After the octopus is alerted, Dorodus and Reastee rush out of their hiding places. The sons concentrate their attacks on the PCs, believing it will be much easier to kill Lord Myca once his lackeys are out of the way. The sons attempt to attack the party from at least two sides. They use the features in Section B to their best advantage: they try to push the PCs into the octopus pool in area 4, into the centipede pit in area 3, or into the crevasse in area 6. If possible, the sons pick up the planks over the pits and use them to shove the PCs into areas 3, 4, and 6.

In the confusion, Lord Myca depends on the PCs to lead him around. Like the sons, the PCs may also use the features of Section B to their advantage. (Remember, if the PCs can lure them to area 2, the sons don't know about the anhkheg.)



Unless they see an opportunity to quickly destroy the PCs, the sons won't remain long in Section B. After a few rounds of combat, Strout shouts a command, and all three sons race into the two passages heading into Section C. Strout runs through the northeast passage leading to area 9, the other two scramble under the remaining snakes and run through the southeast passage leading to area 10. (If only two sons are still alive, one runs through each passage. If only one son is alive, he runs through the southeast passage.)

Once the sons have exited, it's up to the PCs to decide which way to go, although they are likely to opt for the northeast passage to avoid the snakes. However, before they leave Section B, they hear a familiar voice coming from area 5. "Psst! Over here!" It is Benny. He's still searching for a silver mine and has dug a tunnel into the arena from somewhere outside.

When he hears Benny's voice, Lord Myca will assume he is another enemy and demand that the PCs attack. It is up to the PCs to convince Lord Myca not to chase Benny (they could tell him it's a waste of time or that they'll come back after they're done with Ma). Benny will curiously follow the PCs for the rest of the battle. Benny will always avoid combat, preferring to hide or search for silver mines. If the PCs can trick Lord Myca into standing still, Benny can use his kender skills to free the PCs from their chains at the rate of one PC per round. However, it is unlikely they will have an opportunity before the battle has ended.

3. Section C

Lord Myca will not allow the PCs to linger long in Section B—the scent of the Mable family is too strong. If the PCs take the northeast passage, Lord Myca will detect the odor of Ma Mable's cigar as soon as they enter area 9. When the party approaches area 12, Ma leaps from the ledge in area 11 to begin the battle. The son who ran this way immediately joins her in the attack. A shout from Ma brings the remaining sons in from the other passage to attack from behind.

If the PCs take the southeast passage, the sons who ran this way will attack on sight. On a shout from one of the sons, Ma and the son from the northeast passage race in to attack from behind. (Ma hacks away any remaining snakes blocking her way.)

Regardless of which passage the PCs take, the blocked passage at 13b will confine the battle to a relatively small area. The family fights brutally, intending to finish off the PCs before going after Lord Myca. The family fights to the death, pursuing the party if necessary.

4. Dealing with Lord Myca

If the party eliminates Ma Mable and her sons, they still have to deal with Lord Myca, assuming they haven't lost him somewhere along the line. Lord Myca has no intention of sharing his victory with the likes of the PCs. After the battle with the Mable family, Lord Myca turns on the PCs, swinging his axe wildly. If the PCs have managed to free themselves of their chains, Lord Myca pursues them by following their scent.

The PCs shouldn't have much trouble dealing with a blind minotaur. If they are feeling merciful, they could lead him to one of the sinkholes in area 12. If he hasn't done so already, the PCs can ask Benny to free them from their chains.

Wrapping Up

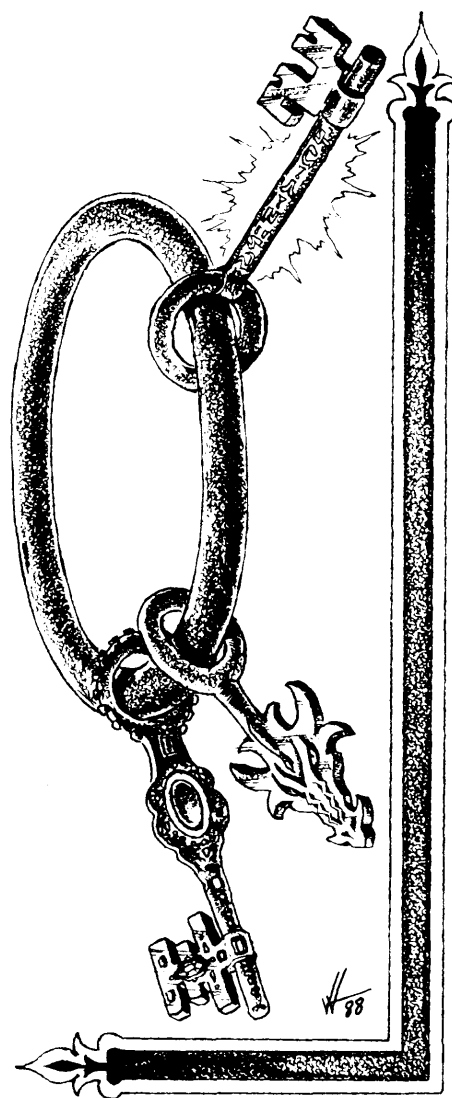
If the PCs have no further business on Mithas and the DM has no other adventures for them here, there are a number of possibilities for getting them off the island.

* 1. Sneaking out through Benny's hole, the PCs can approach the gnomes for help. The gnomes will be glad to be free of Lord Myca and will offer the PCs the use of a collapsible sailboat they've invented, providing the PCs take the gnomes with them.

* 2. The PCs can approach the minotaurs guarding the shipyards. Only four minotaurs are on duty, as the rest left to attend the arena duel. The minotaurs still at the shipyard are angry they were left behind. If the PCs can come up with 50

stl, they can bribe the minotaurs for a small ship.

* 3. If they can defeat the octopus, two of the PCs can use the *potion of water breathing* to follow the underwater passage out to sea. Once there, they can approach a group of sea elves and convince them to help with a rescue of the rest of the party.





The Gate to Neraka



This adventure is designed for play with 5th- to 7th-level characters. The party size should be around five members; more if they all are 5th level and less if they are all 7th level.

DM's Information

On the western shore of the Blood Sea is Kern. Ogre cairns dot the plain. In one, an *amulet of darkness* is found. To the south are the Ogrelands. It is here that a settlement of ogres live in the keep of Ogrebond. The ogres of the area are ruled by a powerful leader: Kern. These ogres are different from their counterparts as they are civilized and motivated by honor and duty, not violence and bloodlust.

In the tower of Ogrebond is a room that holds an inactive magical gate to the town of Neraka, almost 200 miles away. That gate can only be activated by an *amulet of darkness* coupled with a magical phrase. The ogres have no way of activating this gate and it just so happens

that the player characters may have discovered this vital amulet when they entered the lands.

The adventure

The PCs have to be thrown into this adventure. What follows are two ways of doing so:

* 1. The party, sailing out of Flotsam (or some other port), run into a storm. The ship is dashed against the rocks, and all but the PCs are lost. Making their way to shore, they find themselves in the Ogrelands.

* 2. The party is traveling through this area to something on the other side of the Ogrelands, when they enter into this adventure.

In any case, have the PCs traveling southward.

Random encounters

There's a good chance that the player characters encounter monsters as they make their way through the wilds. For every six hours of travel, roll 1d20.

1-7. Nothing

A small animal (like a rabbit for a stewing pot) may be found or spotted in the distance, but that is all.

8-9. Ogre Hunting Party

In the distance, the party sees a band of three barbarian ogres. They look ready for hunting, not raiding. They notice the party and begin heading in the party's direction.

They wear stone necklaces and use stone and wooden weapons; they carry butchered kills over their backs.

The ogres are primitive but not stupid. They can speak ogre and hobgoblin. If someone tries simple common, they'll reply with one-word common responses (yes, no, more, etc.).

The ogres ask the PCs what the hunting is like where the party came from. They'll ask if the party has anything they want to trade (metal weapons, armor, liquor, legible maps, etc.) for furs or meat. If the ogres are treated very poorly or are attacked, they'll spare no effort to exact revenge. The

ogres attack and torture any character who seems lawful good. Otherwise, after a short discussion on the weather, hunting, and encounters, the ogres leave and trouble the characters no more.

Ogres (3): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 29, 29, 28; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (javelin) or 1d8 (battle axe); THAC0 15; AL CE (N).

10-11. Civilized Ogres

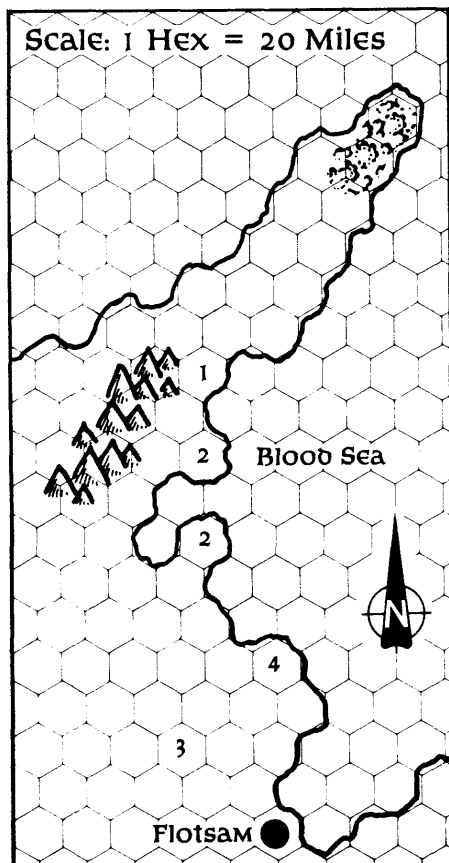
Two ogres are making their way through the terrain. They are dressed in what one would not associate with an ogre. Their clothes look worn from travel but otherwise of fine quality. They are armed with swords and armored in leather. Behind them plods a heavy horse, laden with equipment.

These ogres are civilized, vassals to Kern, one of the head ogres in these parts. Unless one of the party seems to be lawful good, they'll be amiable and ask if the characters want to make camp with them for the night and trade stories and information on the area. If one or more of the PCs seem lawful good, the ogres attack.

If the characters agree to camp with the ogres, the ogres help to set up. After that, they'll hand around a huge flask of wine, offering drinks. The wine is drugged. For every drink, roll 4d8. If the roll is equal to or greater than the character's hit points, he passes out, to which the ogres say, "He can't handle his." If an ogre fails this roll, he becomes sleepy and takes back his bottle "for safe keeping." If all the characters are unconscious, the ogres strip them of their possessions (weapons, clothes, armor, food, etc.) and leave them tied up by the camp. The ogres have a 1d2+1 hour lead on the player characters in addition to the time it takes the PCs to free themselves.

If, by chance, the drugged wine doesn't affect the PCs and the ogres have no chance of attacking them off-guard (asleep and such), the ogres leave in the morning and warn other ogres they meet of the party.

Ogres (2): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 32, 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (two-handed sword); THAC0 15; AL LE





Heavy horse (1): AC 7; MV 24" ; HD 3+3; hp 25; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d4; THAC0 16; AL N

12-13. Sligs

You see four sligs appear from nowhere. Only 20 feet away, they look at you menacingly, draw their clubs, and smack their lips in anticipation.

Unless the characters are neutral evil or chaotic evil and are able to convince the sligs of this, the monsters attack. If a slig kills a character, that PC is hauled out of the battle to await cannibalism (making any hope of resurrection impossible).

The sligs only retreat when three of their number are dead or unconscious. Even in retreat, they'll try to take along any dead or injured PCs.

Apart from their weapons and 1d6 sp apiece, they have nothing of value.

Slig leader: AC 3; MV 9"; HD 6; hp 45; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3; THAC0 13; SA Spittle 1d6; SD cannot burn; AL LE

Sligs (3): AC 3; MV 9"; HD 3+3; hp 25, 24, 21; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2; THAC0 16; SA Spittle 1d6; SD cannot burn; AL LE

14-15. Wolves

The party hears the howlings of wolves in the distance. It's somewhat unsettling.

An hour later, read this out loud:

You see wolves 100 yards behind you and 50 yards to either side. They seem

The wolves try to encircle the PCs and get close enough to attack or kill them.

When the wolves are within combat range they attack until half their number are injured or killed.

Wolves (8): AC 7; MV 18"; HD 2+2; hp 16, 16, 16, 16, 16, 16, 14, 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1; THAC0 16; AL N

16. Common Human Travelers

You sight a group of four humans 100 yards away. They catch sight of you and approach. They look as though they've been traveling for weeks, living off the land.

The four (known as Stibald, Tikefen, Reiswhon, and Carick) are traveling north through the region. If met amiably, they'll trade stories and information. The travelers attack any character who seems evil in alignment. Otherwise, they'll only attack if attacked themselves. They refuse offers to trade goods, make camp, or accompany the party.

Humans (4): AC 6; MV 12"; HD Ftr 3; hp 25, 23, 22, 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (two-handed sword); THAC0 18; AL CG

17. Wolverine

You hear a growling. You turn to see a wolverine, poised to attack.

Wolverine: AC 5; MV 12"; HD 3; hp 20; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1; THAC0 16; AL N (E)

18-19. Deer

Deer are grazing here. They seem not to have noticed the party.

The 8+1d8 deer are busy minding their own business. They could provide a source of food for the characters, if they need to go hunting.

Deer (use the quantity required): AC 8; MV 18"; HD 2; hp 16, 16, 16, 14, 12, 12, 12, 11, 11, 10, 9, 9, 8, 8, 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1db; THAC0 16; AL N

20. Berserk Ogre

You see an ogre making his way through the countryside. He looks formidable, even in comparison to the average ogre.

Upon sighting the party, this ogre, Totunger by name, runs at them with his weapon drawn. He's heroically strong and brave, but also an insane killer, murdering everything not of full ogre blood. He cannot be subdued through reason or threats. He can only be evaded or killed.

Totunger: AC 3; MV 10"; HD 7; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 (two-handed sword); THAC0 13; AL CE

Totunger is encountered once. Future

results of 20 count as 1.

ENCOUNTERS

1. kernen

All around are wild plains blemished by mires. Rock is bared to the winds at places. Wild animals can be seen in the distance, wolves and other predators hunting their prey. The remains of kills are found intermittently. Among all this, you can see a collection of square, almost box-like, hills.

The boxlike hills are actually ogre cairns. Over the years, moss has grown up the sides and grasses have grown from the collected soil on top. Twenty-five ogre cairns are within this hex.

If the characters investigate any of the cairns, they first have to discover the entrance by making a Wisdom Check. Then they have to move the stone slab by making a Strength Check at -3 to a PC's Strength. If two or more characters combine their Strengths, use the total.

Once the first cairn is opened, read the following:

The cairn is dark and cramped. Lying on the floor is the skeleton of an elven mage, sitting on a ledge above the dead elf is an amulet.

This is an *amulet of darkness*, with the phrase, "Often Tor," inscribed on the back. This amulet is needed later, at Ogrebond. Nothing else is in this cairn.

In all subsequent cairns, coins and jewels can be found in addition to the following entry:

The cairn is dark. When light shines in, you see the body of an ogre. It is sitting u, staring at you.

Once a cairn guard, this ogre is now an undead of one of three kinds (see the list below). It orders them to leave and gives the characters one round in which to run and then it attacks. Roll 1d6 to determine the type of undead encountered.

1-3. Ogre skeleton: AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1; hp 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; THAC0



19; SD sharp weapons do ½ dmg; AL N; 2d6 stl in coins and 3d6 stl in jewelry.

4-5, Ogre mummy: AC 3 ; MV 6"; HD 6+3; hp 35; #AT 1; Dmg 1d12; THAC0 13; SA fear; SD harmed only by magical weapons and those do ½ dmg; AL CE (L); 5d6 stl in coins and 10d6 stl in jewelry.

6. Ogre ghost: AC 0; MV 9" ; HD 10; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg Age 1d4x10 years; hit by silver weapons; AL CE (L); 8d4 stl in coins and 5d6+75 stl in jewelry.

2. Death's Teeth

Overlooking the bay is a lonely, dark tower. In the distance, across the bay, is its duplicate. Wild, choppy waters separate the desolate towers.

In the past, the two towers were the homes of two brothers who hated each other. Each stole the family of the other and horribly slew them. After the brothers themselves died, their spirits haunted the towers, hoping still to exact revenge.

Low walls encircle each tower and a small graveyard rest along the side of each tower. Each tower has a dungeon, four floors, and a roof walk.

Eight ghastrs wait in the northern tower's graveyard. The northern tower is haunted by three wraiths and the spectre of one brother. There is a 1-in-6 chance that the undead encounter and attack the PCs when they enter the undead domain.

In the southern tower's graveyard are four ghouls. The southern tower is haunted by three wraiths and the spectre of one brother. There is a 3-in-6 chance that the undead attack the PCs.

Ghastrs (8): AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 22, 22, 21, 21, 20, 20, 19, 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; THAC0 15; SA and SD see the *Monster Manual*; AL CE

Ghouls (4): AC 6; MV 9" 119"; HD 2; hp 13,12,11,10; #AT3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; THAC0 16; SA Paralyzation; SD see the *Monster Manual*; AL CE

Spectre (1): AC 2; MV 15"/30"; HD 7+3; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA

Energy Drain; SD +1 wpn to hit; THAC0 13; AL LE

Wraiths (4): AC 4; MV 12"/24"; HD 5+3; hp 34, 34, 33, 32; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; THAC0 15; SA Energy Drain; SD see the *Monster Manual*, AL LE

Several encounters can be played in either of the towers:

- * Doors that slam shut and then lock themselves.

- * Whistling winds while the air is still.

- * The crypt where the spectre is unturnable

- * Exploding dishes in the kitchen (Dmg 1d4, 1" radius).

- * Animated drapes that bind.

- * Animated furniture (AC 5; MV 9" ; HD 1+1; hp 7; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1; THAC0 18; AL LE).

- * Animated manacles that attack to capture (AC 0; THAC0 16; Dmg 1d6+1; hp 16).

A total of 8,000 steel pieces lie throughout each of the two towers. But the money is cursed. Anyone who steals any of the money cannot speak plainly, suffering a -20% on all reaction rolls. In addition, hostile creatures attack with a +1 bonus to hit.

3. Ogrelands

Grassy steppes and a dark forest give way to grim lands. At places, the ground is bare, baked and cracked. Grasses and shrubbery lie dead in the earth; only a few sickly trees survive by the river. Steep, craggy hills and dusty canyons from the north open into the ogrelands.

To the west is the Vale of Vipers. It is a 200-foot-deep valley with groves of fruit trees bordering a clear lake. The stones found here are not rocks—they are diamonds (worth 20d6 stl apiece). However, they are poisonous to the touch, soaking through even cloth in a matter of hours (DM's discretion). If the poison touches the skin, it causes 2d4+3 points of damage. The diamonds can only be cleaned if they are soaked in alcohol (50% alcohol content or better) for a week. Any other

treatment does nothing.

Also in the valley are venomous snakes and the odd ogre. Each turn, roll 3d10 twice and check the two encounter rolls below:

3-8. No Encounter

9-22. **Huge Snakes (2):** AC5; MV 15"; HD 4+2; hp 20, 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; THAC0 15; SA Poison (3d6); AL N

23-28. **Giant Snake (1):** AC 8; MV 6"; HD 12; hp 65; #AT 1; Dmg 1d12; THAC0 9; SA Spit Acid; SD Blunt weapons do ½ damage; AL N

29. **Gargantuan Serpent (1):** AC 2; MV 10"; HD 30; hp 80; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10/3d12; THAC0 7; AL N

30. **Barbarian Ogres (2):** AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 19, 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; THAC0 7; AL CE

There is a 1-in-4 chance that two encounters that appear at the same time fight each other and ignore the PCs.

Other sights include:

- * An ogre grave site. The ogres leave their dead—both ogriish and non-ogriish—to be scavenged by the birds.

- * A human corpse hanging upside down from a cliff face, his body blistered and burnt by the sun.

- * A giant snake lying dead and decaying with two man-sized bulges in its mid-section.

4. Ogrebond

When the characters get within ten miles of Ogrebond, there is a 2-in-6 chance (rolled per eight hours) that they encounter a human patrol from Ogrebond. The patrol stops the PCs and questions them on their activities in the area. The leader says that their master, "Lord Kern," would like the pleasure of the PCs' company; the leader asks the PCs to come along. Kern is described as the "Lord of Kernen and the ruler of Ogrebond." If asked what race he is, the patrol leader responds with, "To ask such a question is in bad taste." If the party refuses the patrol's request, the patrol attacks and takes any captured PCs to Ogrebond as their prisoners. If they fail in this and are themselves defeated, they



'll tell the PCs where OGREBOND is but underestimate its strength in forces. They admit to having prisoners there and that the PCs were about to add to the lot.

Human patrol leader (Stiir Bothan): AC 3; MV 12"; F5; hp 34; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1; THACO 16; AL CN (LE)

Human patrol (9): AC 4; MV 12"; F2; hp 17, 16, 16, 14, 13, 13, 13, 12, 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1; THACO 20; AL CN (E)

The land surrounding OGREBOND is described as:

This is a broken land dotted with clumps of dying flora. Clouds and grey skies always hover overhead, blotting out the sun by day and the stars by night. Only the poorest examples of game can be seen scrounging for a bleak meal.

If OGREBOND itself is seen from outside, it's described as:

The keep is situated on the top of a high, steep hill. A dusty, poorly made road leads up to the front gate. The route is lined with victims impaled on pikes. Guards keep watch from atop the stone walls.

There are 1d3+1 guards on any wall the characters approach. All are ogres. If the PCs arrive on their own, the guards command the PCs to state their business. If the PCs are asking for aid, trade, or an audience, the guards duck out of sight then return, allowing the characters to enter. Once inside, the PCs are captured and taken to Kern.

If they are taken in by the patrol, they are allowed through wordlessly whereby the same thing happens.

Ogre guards (4): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 23, 20, 19, 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; THACO 15; AL LE (C)

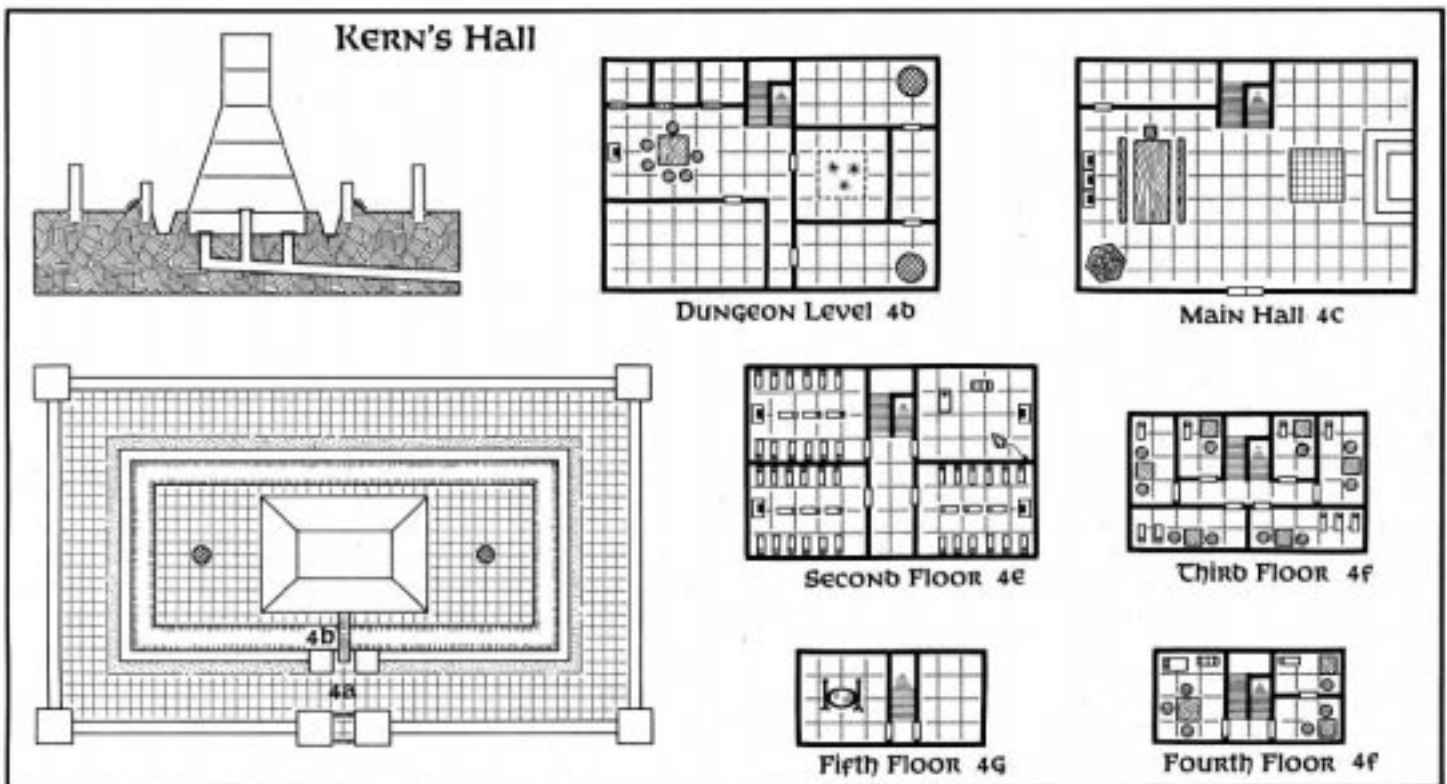
Inside OGREBOND

The various sections of OGREBOND are described briefly:

* The outer wall is 40 feet tall; the inner is 25 feet high. The outer wall is 300 feet wide by 500 feet long. The inner wall is 50 feet from the outer wall, defended by spikes that inflict 1d6 points of damage if fallen upon.

* The keep has five floors and a dungeon. The building tapers until the top two floors are levels of a tower.

One area not mentioned in any of the encounters is the sewer. In several places in the courtyard, in the baths, and in the corner of a large room are sewer grates. Those inside rooms and the baths are 1x1 feet. Those outside are 3x3. The grates require a Strength Check to lift. They make enough noise to attract anyone within 10". After climbing down a filthy tube for 30+1d6 rounds, those in the sewer come to a tunnel that stretches beyond the hillside and into a mound of rocks. While in the sewer, there is a 10% chance that one character contracts a parasitic disease.





4a. Gate House

The gate house has two large gates and a spiked portcullis. The gates are shut at all times and guards are always on the lookout.

The gate is manned by guards (as per the wall). The gates take two rounds to open or close. The portcullis takes two segments to lower and two rounds to raise. If it strikes a character while falling, it inflicts 2d10 points of damage (THAC0 19).

4b. Gully

A four-foot-wide, wooden bridge separates the inner court from the keep itself. Beneath it is a 12-foot-deep gully, the home of two giant boars. They grunt and snarl, awaiting their next, unlucky meal.

The boars take care of invaders and the victims of Kern's wrath.

Giant boars (2): AC 6; MV 12"; HD 7; hp 30, 29; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6; THAC0 13; AL N

4c. Main Hall

Upon entering the keep (via the main entrance), the characters find the main hall.

The main hall is a huge, nearly empty room with a banquet table to the left and a throne on a dais to the right. The walls are bare of any plaques or coats of honor. Behind the banquet table is a fire used for roasting the occasional catch. Stairs leading both up and down are on the far side of the hall from the door. A doorway is in the far left corner.

The banquet table is used every night. Ogre guards (2d3+2 in number) keep watch at the entrance. There are five ogres that are referred to as "lords." At any one time, 1d4+1 lords are in the hall. Their names are Zorn, Grausam, Weh, Gewalt, and Tod. If not addressed as "lord," any of these ogres attack the transgressor. Also here are 1d8+2 ogresses, part of the keep's harem. There's a 50% chance that, if others are here, Chieftain Kern (occasionally called "Sire," by ogres) is here, too. There are 1d4 human slaves, as well as 1d4-1 elves locked in a cage by the fire. At the end of a dinner, one of the elves may be taken

from the cage and roasted for the enjoyment of the ogres.

A metal grate in the center of the room covers a games pit. In the games pit are three black willows (described in area 4d). Kern often sends powerful foes to entertaining deaths within this pit.

Stairs lead down to the dungeon. The archway to the left leads into a kitchen and store area for the food.

Ogre guards (8): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 22, 21, 20, 20, 19, 18, 16, 15; #AT1; Dmg 1d10; THAC0 15; AL LE (C)

Chieftain Kern: AC 3; MV 10" ; HD 7; hp 5 5; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8 (huge battle axe); THAC0 13; AL LE (C). Kern's personality is described later in this adventure.

Ogre lords (5): AC 3; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 33, 31, 31, 30, 30; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 THAC0 15; AL LE (C)

Ogresses (10): AC 5; MV 8"; HD 4+1; hp 20, 19, 18, 18, 16, 16, 14, 14, 13, 12; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; THAC0 15 ; AL LE (C)

Human slaves (4): AC 9; MV 12"; F1; hp 8, 7, 6, 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 20; AL CN (L)

Captured Elves (3): AC 6; MV 12"; HD 1+1; hp 5, 5, 3; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 20; AL CG

4d. Dungeon

The entire level beneath the main floor is the dungeon. 1d3+1 guards (use statistics from area 4c) patrol the corridors inspecting all areas. Down here are several rooms:

* Directly beneath the grating in the main hall is the games pit. There's one locked, man-sized exit. Inside are the three black willows. The room is a dank pit with shafts of lights filtering in from above. The bodies and possessions of many a past victim litter the ground under the black willows.

Black willows (3): AC 2; MV ¼"; HD 16; hp 70, 65, 60; #AT 10; Dmg 1d4 (x10); THAC0 7; SA and SD *see Monster*

Manual II; AL N (E)

There are three prison cells. Each is damp and musty with age. Bones of dead prisoners sit in the corners. The straw on the floor is very soiled.

If any characters are locked in a cell, they are chained to the shackles on the wall for all but one hour a day. The shackles are weak and rusted and can be broken if the character rolls less than his Strength on 1d100 roll. Each attempt causes 1d4-1 points of damage as the character's wrists are dug into by the shackles. For each day of captivity, a cumulative 2% chance exists that a spectre appears. It tells the character that it is a former prisoner. It then awaits the arrival of a guard and attacks until the guard dies or escapes. If the guard is killed, it becomes the spectre's slave and frees all captured prisoners. Then the spectre promptly disappears.

Spectre (1): AC 2; MV 15"/30"; HD 7+3; hp 55; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 13; SA Energy drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL LE (N)

The treasure room is locked by two locks and made so that a Strength Check is required if anyone with less than 18/25 Strength tries to open it. The only keys for the locks are kept by Kern. A guard passes by the door every turn. If the door is found ajar, the guard alerts the other guards in the dungeon.

The boxlike room has shelves of coins and gems, all packed away in bags. This is Kern's treasury.

The PCs find 75 bags with 250 steel pieces each. There are also five bags with 50 stl in gems apiece. Ten bags intermingled with the rest have traps inside. These traps, when sprung, spray a mist that causes 2d4 points of damage and induces unconsciousness for 1d4+1 turns; 1d4 points of damage and no unconsciousness if a successful saving throw vs. poison is made. If an Intelligence Check is made, these trapped bags can be identified by a slightly different knot that ties them closed.



4e. Guard barracks

The entire second floor is the quarters for the guards. Two barracks hold 15 ogre guards each, one barrack holds 15 non-ogre guards and one room is Lord Tod's, commander of the guard:

The barracks are standard with 16 ramshackle bunk beds, a fireplace, and the odd rat scurrying back and forth.

By night, 1d6+8 sleeping guards are here (use statistics from earlier). They are automatically surprised if attacked and can cause only 1d4 points of damage (with their fists).

By day, 1d6+2 guards are awake or resting. Those awake are cleaning their weapons and preparing for their next shift.

The commander's quarters are simple: a bed, a chest, and a cabinet. A pet wolverine, chained to the wall, growls in the corner.

Lord Tod (see statistics in 4c) is in his room 10% of the time during the day and 90% at night. His pet wolverine is always there, ready to kill intruders. The chain that binds it enables it to move anywhere within the room. Also in the room is a small chest with 200 stl.

Giant Wolverine (1): AC 4; MV 15" // 9"; HD 4+4; hp 30; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d4; THAC0 11; SA Musk; AL N (E)

4f. Noble's Quarters

On the third floor, and the one above, are the quarters of Kern, the rest of his lords, his guests, and his females. All occupied rooms are nearly barren of decor, featuring little more than a bed, table, chest, cabinet, and a collection of weapons. The guest quarters are similar (but without the weapons). A cache of 5d6 stl can be scrounged from each room with some searching. At night, there is a 70% chance that the occupants of the quarters are in bed. By day, there is a 5% chance they'll be in the room.

An ogre guard is always posted in front of Kern's quarters. Another ogre guard patrols the outside of the lords' quarters, and two human guards stand outside the females' quarters.

4g. Gate to Neralca

On the top level of the tower is a locked room. Once the lock is picked and the door is opened, the PCs see a room with no windows and no vents. Inside sits a decorated and gilded disk, almost like a glassless mirror. The room smells of age and abandonment.

This is the portal between Ogrebond and the town of Neraka. With the *amulet of darkness* and the phrase "Often Tar" (when spoken by an ogre), the gate is activated and allows travelers to move back and forth from Ogrebond to Neraka. The phrase, if spoken by a non-ogre, causes a flare of light but doesn't open the gate. In Neraka, this gate is invisible on the side of a wall in an alley. Unless someone there is looking for the portal, they'll not find it. The portal can be closed by anyone saying, "Close gate" while holding the amulet.

If the ogres are asked about how they came to possess the gate, they refuse to say. It was built by an ogre mage for the express use of this keep.

KERN

Kern is an overly muscular ogre, dressed in fine armor and armed with a huge battle axe. His skin is a mottled combination of pale violet and light blue. Across his forehead and neck are bumps and warts. His black-green hair is cut short to his scalp. His eyes are red with purple pupils; his teeth and talons range from red to orange.

Kern is stubborn and forceful. He craves power and uses his strength, cunning, and position to get it. He tries to hold a semblance of court manners, having servants and lords with himself as their ruler.

Strangely, he and his court have tried to maintain some semblance of civilization. They can all speak ogrish, hobgoblin, common and the lawful evil alignment language. Kern and his lords are as well groomed as the average person of the day and age.

Kern is cruel to those who look to be no threat, especially elves. He is also cruel to those who dispute his authority and who "don't play by the rules." For a character to escape Kern's wrath, he would have to

be equal or superior in strength and ability and not be humble while still paying respect to Kern. Needless to say, few accomplish this.

When the characters and Kern first meet, make a reaction roll applying any of the Charisma bonuses the party has. Each elven character adds an automatic -15% to the reaction. Half-ogres add +10% apiece to the roll. Characters acting good (in alignment) add -5% to the reaction each. Each character acting evil or chaotic adds +5%. Kern is not enthusiastically friendly. If the reaction is favorable, he asks them to stay at the court for a day, maybe two. If it's a bad reaction, he casts them out of the keep after first stripping them of their rations and water. If the reaction is bad enough (25% or less) he treats them as though they attacked his court, as follows:

If the party attacks Kern and his retinue, Kern has them captured, beaten to within a hit point of their lives and then thrown into the prison cells until Kern decides to have them killed, or perhaps put against the black willows.

If the party and Kern come to a friendly agreement, he asks them to attend dinner. If they refuse, he forces them from Ogrebond, without rations. If they accept, play out The Dinner.

Learning of The amulet

If Kern learns that the PCs have the *amulet of darkness*—or know of its whereabouts—he demands they give it to him. If they refuse, Kern orders his guards to attack them, haul them off to the dungeon, and return with all of their equipment. On the other hand, if the *amulet* is handed over, or Kern is told of its location, he thanks them and says the following:

We ogres have been looking for the *amulet of darkness* for untold years. In fact, we gave up the search long ago. Now, with it in my grasp again, we can take the riches that we deserve from the town on the other side of the westward mountains: Neraka. It's a fine escape route for myself and my court and an excellent depository for my enemies.



If Kern doesn't have the *amulet*, but knows where it is, he sends a squad of five ogres and Lord Grausam to fetch and return with it in 20 days.

If he has the *amulet*, he takes it to the gate room and tries to use it. If successful, he sends his human patrol through the portal to inspect the town and return with a full report. While this is going on, four ogre guards keep watch on the gate room door while Kern and Lord Tod are inside. The detachment returns with news of the town, speaking of its moderate size, wealth, and especially its weak defenses.

Kern, after hearing the news, plans a raid. He sends Lords Tod, Web, and Zorn, the human patrol, and six guards. Just before his raiders are sent off, Kern orders that the PCs be locked in the prison cells if they are not already there. (He orders their release when the raid is over). If he meets any character before their "lock-up," he simply says, "I apologize for this treatment," then laughs aloud.

After getting the *amulet*, Chieftain Kern keeps it about his neck night and day. Luckily, because of his thick hide, any attempt to palm the amulet from Kern (using *pick pocket* chance) has a +10% chance of succeeding. Kern checks twice or more every hour to make sure he still has it.

The Dinner

Read this aloud as the introduction to the dinner event:

Later in the evening, the lords, ogresses, and Kern file into the main hall. On the table are kegs of strong wine and ale. Roots and tubers sit unwashed in bowls on the table. The huge chairs are quickly occupied with just enough left for the party. The smell of bloodied, unspiced meat can be sniffed in the air, wafting from the kitchen. A fire is raging in the fireplace and the elves, captured in cages beside it, look very frightened. Perhaps the ogres are going to have them over for dinner. Ragged slaves run about doing five jobs at once.

When everyone has arrived and sat down, the meal begins.

As the evening goes on, Kern asks the characters if they've heard the tale of the beginning, when there were but three races. If not, Kern relates the following tale:

"When the world was formed, the gods fought over the spirits of the races. The Gods of Evil wanted to enslave the races. The Gods of Good wanted to give them power over the world. The Gods of Neutrality—in their only spark of wisdom—wanted the races to be free to choose between Good and Evil. In a compromise, the three races were born. The elves came from the Gods of Good and haven't developed since. The Gods of Neutrality brought man to Krynn. They spawned the gnomes. And some of the gnomes became kender and dwarves, split because of their feudings over the Greystone of Gargath. And then there were the ogres. We, the slaves of Evil, were the most beautiful of all three. More beautiful than elves," Kern says with scorn. He points a finger to a guard who pulls one of the remaining elves from the cage near the fire. A quiet crackling of elven hair on fire follows.

"We were more beautiful, stronger, more graceful. Then the Greystone trailed its poison throughout Krynn. Ogres grew ugly. Some degenerated into goblins, some into hobgoblins, and some into giants. Others mingled with horses and bulls, springing forth minotaurs and centaurs. The perfect race fell from its glory. Elves were seen as the beautiful and articulate ones." Kern looks to the fire and humanoid form crackling above the flames.

Kern sits quiet for a moment then calls for the spit to be emptied and its meat to be served to all those that have the stomach for it.

In addition to the human slaves of encounter 4c, there are eight kender slaves who spend most of their time in the kitchen, occasionally emerging with joyless looks on their faces. They do whatever is wanted of them and then they return from whence they came.

Kender slaves (8): AC 7; MV 9"; HD 1d6; hp 5, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 3; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; THAC0 20; SA +3 with slings or bows; SD Save at +4 lvls; AL CN

Kern takes great delight in attacking his slaves during dinner. If they take the slightest bit too long in performing a task, he slaps them down and humiliates them to appreciative hoots from his cronies.

If Kern's periodic cruelty to his slaves is challenged, he knocks the challenger over and calmly demands that he fight if he wishes to defend the "less-than-worthless" slaves. If the character accepts, Kern battles him one-on-one until one of them can no longer fight because of unconsciousness or death. If any of the other characters try to join in, they'll be attacked by two guards apiece and brought away from the duel.

If Kern is killed, the ogres hail the victor as their ruler. This places the new ruler as a likely candidate for assassination, surely within a few nights. If Kern wins, he tells his guards to drag the loser out of the keep and toss him down the side of the hill. He then asks if any other characters wish to question his treatment of the slaves. If any do, he takes them on as well. If, by chance, only one PC remains, that PC is cast out of the keep with his companions.

The slaves revolt *en masse* if a PC is able to kill Kern. Similarly, if the player characters start a general battle with the ogres, the slaves assist in combatting their masters.

If no hostilities occur, then when the meal is over and various tales have been exchanged, the court disperses, most of them returning to their quarters. The PCs play out what happens every night they are guests of Kern, as described in the *Guests* section.



guests

The PCs are escorted to their rooms and left for the night after festivities are over. Outside each room, a guard is placed. The guard will not allow a character to leave the room or another to enter. If a character starts a fight to leave, the guard will defend himself and call for the guards watching the other rooms to come to his aid. If the fight goes on for more than two melee rounds, the lords and Kern are alerted and come out to investigate. All are armed and ready for trouble.

Kern allows the player characters to stay only two days. They may stay an additional day if two or more of them have Charismas of 17 or more. They may stay another additional day if one of the characters is of evil alignment, or if none of the characters are good in alignment.

If Kern is awaiting his patrol's retrieval of the *amulet*, he demands that the characters stay until the patrol returns. If it returns empty-handed, Kern becomes furious and orders all the characters hung upside down on the outer wall until they are dead. This punishment inflicts 1d6+4 points of damage per day. However, the characters may attempt once daily to free themselves with a Dexterity Check at a -5 penalty. The characters will be let down if they give the location of the *amulet* and the patrol retrieves it.

Even if the characters leave on amiable terms, Chieftain Kern will not allow them back into his keep, nor will he give them aid. His patrols will not attack the characters or question them, but that is all. If they do return, he has a guard tell them to be gone and that they have had "all they're allowed." If the characters persist, all the guards present on the wall attack with heavy crossbows (1d4+1 dmg).

If the characters fall into disfavor with Kern, he may wish to keep them as his slaves. Each day of being a slave exposes a character to 1d4 chances of receiving 1db-3 points of damage from assorted cruelties. Elven or half elven characters are sure to be beaten daily, suffering 1d6+1 points of damage per beating. If a character collapses at any time, he will be discarded, scarred by guards' blades (1d6 damage), tossed into the sewer (see the *Inside Ogrebond* sec-

tion), and left for dead.

ENDING This adventure

The characters, if they escape with their lives, may want to head south to the port city of Flotsam. (Actually, they are free to head in any direction they wish, exploring the world of Krynn through the other adventures in this book or the DRAGONLANCE® saga modules.

If the characters are captives of Kern, they have various ways to engineer an escape. They may kill Kern in a duel and thus be released. They may start a revolt of the slaves. They may sneak out of the keep through the sewers. If they don't escape in a week, it's certain that they'll be killed at an ogre's whim.

The repercussions of the various ways to end this adventure follow:

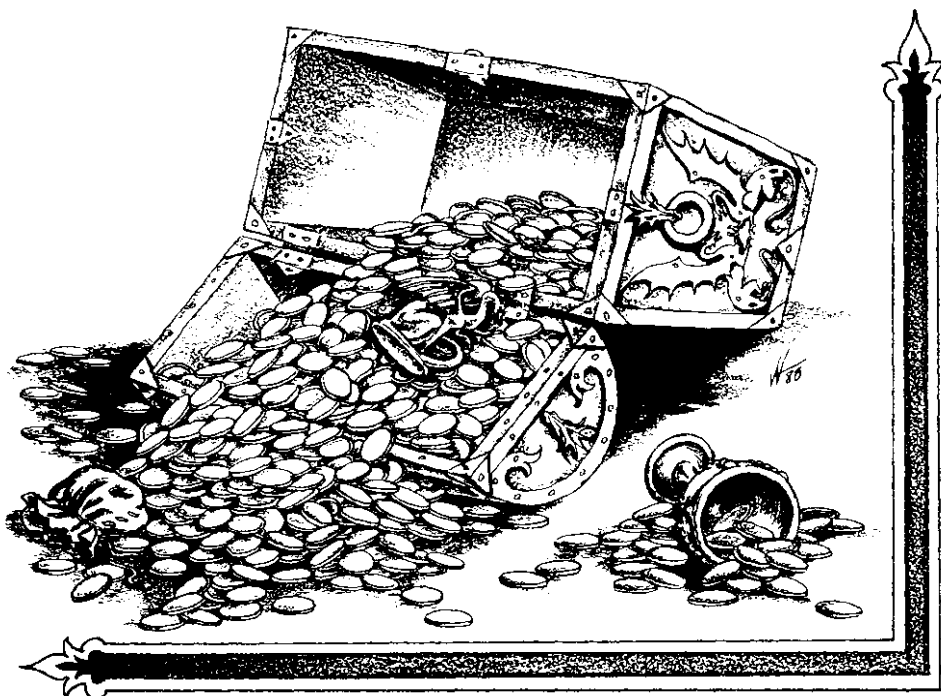
Kern doesn't know of the *amulet*: If Kern doesn't know of the *amulet*'s existence, he lets the characters stay at Ogrebond for however long he would allow, as given in the Guests section, and have them leave.

Kern has the *amulet*: Kern possesses the *amulet* and is able to lead his warriors to Neraka to raid it at their leisure. If the characters get to Neraka, they may find one of these raids going on and be able to solve a mystery for the townspeople: Where are the ogres coming from?

Kern doesn't have the *amulet* but knows where it is: Kern sends a party of ogres to fetch the *amulet*. They return in 5+1d10 days and put the *amulet* into use.

The *amulet* is stolen from Kern and the thief escapes: If one of the party escapes with the *amulet of darkness*, Kern sends two of his humans (Stiir Bothan and a nameless guard) to track the character down, retrieve the *amulet*, and kill the thief. The word is also spread among ogres making for a 5% chance that an ogre meeting the thief recognizes him and attacks him to take the *amulet* from him.

Ogrebond is ravaged by the party: If the party was lucky enough to wreak havoc at Ogrebond and escape, the survivors will follow the PCs as long as it takes to exact vengeance.





Beyond All Tears



This adventure can be used with a party of up to ten PCs, levels 8-9, any class of race. It is designed for the world of Krynn after the downfall of the Dragon Highlords. However, "Beyond All Tears" could occur at any other time or place with only slight modification. You may place the Fourth Moon Inn in any part of Ansalon you desire.

DM's Information

In this adventure the PCs become trapped in nether worlds, snared by a magical card. Here, Berem Everman lives on as a shade, cursed to wander undying. But death cannot be cheated. Whenever the Foundation Stone saves Berem's life, a living victim will be drawn into the Abyss...and the PCs find themselves among these unfortunates.

Nilhila, a cambion Marquis, takes full advantage of these circumstances and has been collecting humans. He hopes to develop a world, a miniature Prime Material Plane, on his layer of the Abyss, where he will be both a god and a king. Many lesser demons share this dream, or at least serve Nilhila to avoid slavery under some other demon prince. None of Nilhila's servants will *summon* other demons, since they cannot control where the allies come from, and the newcomers might wreak unknown havoc on this project.

Nilhila's realm, like all planes, knows the terror of Takhisis, Queen of Darkness, and she harbors deep suspicions about Nilhila's project. The idea of Nilhila inventing a place where Takhisis does not rule irritates her. She also worries that her servants on Krynn may become trapped in this artificial world. Therefore she has forced Nilhila to create a set of talismans, the *freedom pieces*, to enable prisoners to escape. These look like brass manacles, with specially weakened links in the chain.

In theory, anyone, prisoner or demon, on Nilhila's plane could leave by using a freedom piece to chain him/herself to a device called the *portal stake*, and ritually snapping the chains. Actually, the shades of Berem and Jasla have become involved and have worked out a compromise with

Nilhila. Berem's spirit will aid the demon's victims and even submit to their control, while Jasla holds the gates to Krynn shut, keeping all Abyssal creatures trapped below. Nilhila does not interfere with either activity.

In return Jasla has agreed to consider the nature of each person who escapes the Abyss past her, and judge them according to their deeds, to satisfy Nilhila's perverted sense of justice. Those who have done evil will be cursed. Furthermore, as Nilhila knows well, Jasla cannot tell who approaches her gate, and neither human nor demon may leave unless her brother intercedes on their behalf. So Jasla presents a final obstacle to PCs who find the *freedom pieces*. Only by subtly manipulating Berem, and valiantly resisting Nilhila, can the PCs escape.

The adventure

The adventure begins while the PCs are staying in the Fourth Moon Inn, an establishment that has been run by the same family for longer than any business on Krynn. Dark dreams haunt each PC the night before this adventure. A voice stammers, speaking horribly slowly, so that the PCs can barely stand to listen. It says, "Make ready, get your gear...you shall travel." A gentle, female voice follows, saying, "I fear I must watch you, for Nilhila forbids forgiveness. Beware, you shall be held to account." Then the PCs see a pillar, crusted with a mosaic of gems, from which one emerald has been torn, leaving a dirty hole. The hole fascinates the PCs, drawing them to it. Then they waken.

The next day seems normal at first, although the dreamers feel somewhat tired. When the PCs leave their rooms, they gather to discuss their strange dreams. The group brushes past mysterious gamblers and walks past a tattered card on the ground, trampled and dirty. Before anyone can speak, each PC feels a sharp pain in the back, as if stabbed by an assassin. Actually, the PCs have been forced through the card into Nilhila's realm. Anybody watching will see the characters flinch from some unseen enemy and then vanish. The card travels with

them, although it has lost its power. It proves to be a tarot plaque signifying great evil and mockeries of reality.

In the Abyss the PCs find themselves in an expanse of white sand, illuminated by a brilliant sky. Its dimensions seem to fluctuate before the eyes, so that the area appears first to be a tiny chamber, then a vast plain. From above they hear Berem's thick voice say, "I'm sorry." Then they are under attack. Five chasme, serving Nilhila, have come to capture the PCs and take them to the Cell, described on page 32. If the PCs lose, their possessions are taken to Nilhila's Apartment, at area 6b.

Chasme (5): AC -1; MV 6"/21"; HD 7+2; hp 50 each; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4; THACO 13; SA *darkness, detect good, detect invisible, telekinese* 1,500 gp weight, fear touch, drone causes sleep 100% of the time, -10% per level of victim; MR 40%; AL CE

Berem's dreams

For several days the PCs wander in a dazed state. They walk the sands of the Abyss, if they are free, or languish in the Cell, if the chasme defeated them. This period lasts for at least three days, or longer, depending on the results of encounters. Every six hours, a shimmering image appears before the party, letting them commune with Berem in his shadow world. He roams a version of Krynn five years before the Heroes of the Lance began their search for true gods. No matter what towns Berem visits, a shadow version of the Fourth Moon Inn will always be nearby.

The PCs can sense whatever Berem experiences, and even suggest his courses of action, but they cannot enter his dreamworld. They remain either in the Cell or the abyssal desert. Remember that the PCs need to eat, drink, and sleep in the Abyss. They will probably have to steal in order to survive. While the PCs wander freely, there is a 1-in-20 chance per hour that they will meet a chasme patrol, identical to the one described above. No other creatures will be randomly encountered here.

A PC who communes with Berem can



sense what Berem sees, hears, smells, feels, and tastes, but not read the Everman's mind. The PCs can suggest solutions to his problems, but not actually communicate or ask questions. Berem knows how the PCs can escape, but they must learn it indirectly.

While contacting the Everman, a PC can inspire him to perform various actions as if using an unlimited number of *suggestion* spells. When two characters try to send contradictory *suggestions*, both players must roll Wisdom Checks (to succeed, the player must roll his PC's Wisdom score or lower on 1d20). The first character to fail loses this chance to control the Everman.

Although Berem cannot die and is immune to many attack forms, the PCs must be extremely careful with the *suggestions* they give him. Whenever he loses 37 hp, or suffers any other attack that would kill a normal 5th-level ranger, another victim is sucked into the Abyss. At the DM's option, this may be a PC, a friend of a PC, or a powerful enemy who can compete for the *freedom pieces*. You may use NPCs from your campaign, or design them to fit the occasion.

Berem looks like a middle-aged man with a long mass of white beard and whiskers. A green emerald has been imbedded in his chest; he is careful to hide it at all times. The Everman means well, but he has been away from humanity for almost 400 years and possesses no social skills whatsoever. He has almost forgotten how to speak: he can only mutter at a rate of five words per round. Whatever Berem does, his one concern is to eventually find a way back to Neraka and atone for his theft. The PCs and their fate also obsess Berem, and he vaguely knows that the more often he explains ways for them to escape, the more likely they are to be saved.

Berem Everman: AC 10; MV 12"; R5; hp 37; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; THAC0 16; S 12,115, W 11, D 12, Cn 13, Ch 13; SD immune to fire, acid, poison, magic, disease, and petrification, regenerates 1 hp/round; AL NG; He owns no weapon but always carries 1d100 cp from begging.

Each time the PCs make contact with

Berem, he is engaged in some event on his shadow world. Use the following encounters in the order that they are presented. Remember that the PCs can inspire Berem to perform various actions, and this may alter the encounters substantially. The ordinary people that Berem meets all have the following statistics unless other attributes are listed.

Ordinary NPC: AC 10; MV 12"; Oth-level; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; THAC0 20; AL LG

first Commune

The first time the PCs contact Berem, he is fleeing two portly guardsmen. One of them shouts, "Come back here, you moron! We ain't gonna hurt you." Berem dashes wildly through a series of back alleys, heading for the wilderness outside town. The constables are investigating the disappearance of the PCs, since a shadow party has vanished in this illusionary world. The police mean Berem no harm, they merely want to question him.

A PC can suggest that Berem surrender, and although the guards will wonder why he felt the need to escape, they do not really suspect the old idiot of murder. The PCs may invent excuses for Berem, or they can have him tell the truth. Unless some PC intervenes, Berem outruns the police only to be captured the next day by a large force of guards, all of whom are stung at being evaded. The High Theocrat will have him hanged. Remember the consequences of Berem's death.

Guards: AC 6; MV 6"; 0th-level; hp 7 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; THAC0 20; AL LN; scale mail, spears

If Berem tells the truth, he will say, "Not my fault. My punishment." The guards will become bored while waiting for more words and leave. Over the four turns, Berem says, "Curse. I live through death....Someone die through life. Debt...to Nilhila. But they can...escape."

Second Commune

A group of ten children follow Berem, laughing and teasing. They all cluster around a boy in a miniature fur cape, who happens to be the son of the Highseeker.

This boy asks what Berem thinks about, since he never talks, inspiring the Everman to explain about his curse and the fact that other people have been imprisoned in the Abyss to compensate.

Berem's slow, conjected voice fascinates the children, and they begin demanding that he recite assorted rhymes and slogans. The PCs may choose between having Berem become angry or behave in a fatherly way. Anger will drive the children away, but if Berem is gentle, they will eventually return to tormenting him again. The rewards of befriending these children come later, when the PCs attempt to escape the Abyss.

Third Commune

Berem stands in an inn, drinking a mug of ale and dribbling most of it into his beard. The bartender is a short, business-like man who says, "Listen, bum, whose wants ta drink watchin' you? Go siddown somewhere, or I'll kill ya." Berem takes him quite seriously and recites the story of how he lives through death but other people die in life, as described earlier. The bartender silently grips Berem's collar and walks him to a table in the corner, where a warty peasant woman sits.

Everman's explanation continues for its full 40 minutes, and the woman pities this idiot. She puts her hand on his shoulder and asks how "they" can escape. At this, Berem begins breathing heavily. It will be obvious to the PCs, and to everyone else, that he thinks the woman is in love with him. He starts to embrace her, and as he does, a sturdy man, obviously her husband, strides forward.

Unless a PC intervenes, Berem kisses the peasant wife, provoking her husband into punching him. Berem fights back, and if he kills the man, the townspeople will lynch him. If the PCs warn Berem not to kiss the woman, he realizes what has happened, becomes embarrassed and decides to answer her question. He will tell her, "They escape with a charm... *freedom piece*. But I must beg, or...my sister keeps them trapped...she holds the gate shut.... Even after...they escape, Nilhila will judge."



fourth Commune

It is night. Rain pours down as Berem slogs through a town, his sodden clothes plastered against his skin. The Everman slips through someone's back door—only to find himself in a gnome's workshop. The gnome's name begins with "Dagniel" and continues for possibly an hour. He has a tuft of white hair on his chin and a wrinkled, bald head. He is quite glad to have company so that he can talk about an interesting new theory. His theory states that the whole universe might just be a tiny particle on some vast gnome's anvil, and that every particle on every anvil just might be an entire universe. Berem listens attentively as hours go by.

After Berem has listened for 24 hours, the gnome politely says, "Imustbeborinyou. Whatprojectshaveyoubeenworkingon?" For a moment, there is silence. Unless the PCs suggest that Berem speak, they will have to wait another day before the gnome finishes explaining about the customers who buy smith-work from him. When the PCs have Berem talk, he will describe the curse again and the fact that victims can escape with the *freedom pieces* and petition to Jasla.

This intrigues Dagniel, since he once made a study of curses. Dagniel will ask Berem to describe the *freedom pieces*, and the Everman haltingly explains that they are brass manacles with a weakened chain. To use them, everyone who plans to escape must be handcuffed in a row and fastened to a post called the *portal stake* in a demon's palace. Then they all ritually break free. This action will *teleport* them home. The gnome immediately begins designing an improved version. Eventually Berem wanders away while the gnome is eating.

fifth Commune

Berem leans against a building on a sunbaked street as hordes of people bustle past. Suddenly, Dagniel comes running from the crowd. He wants to know what has to be done so that Jasla will let the victims escape. Before Berem can answer, two young merchants take Dagniel's arms and start to drag him away. "Don't bother him," one says, "Poor guy

can't defend himself—he's mute. Don't make him give ear to your prattle." PCs may suggest that Berem protest, in which case the merchants release Dagniel with a shrug. Then Berem will explain that someone must build an altar of flowers at the spot where the PCs were kidnapped and lay an iron key on it. Iron, as all know, is abhorrent to demons.

When all of these events have occurred, the bond between Berem and the PCs snaps, leaving the party alone in the Abyss. Let them do whatever they want, starting in the Cell if they were captured, or the desert if they were not. The PCs will not see Berem again until they assemble at the *portal stake* and attempt to use the *freedom pieces*. More information can be found under "The Escape" section.

1. The Cell

This building is a dome of lumpy copper where Nilhila's servants break new slaves to their will. If the PCs are brought here as prisoners, go through Berem's Communes, and then have each PC slowly awaken. The guards give them a little salty water, but no food. Then four type IV demons assault the party, while the chasme who caught them buzz about, cheering. These monsters are extremely careful not to kill anyone, but they torment the PCs without mercy. During the fight, the PCs notice a man sprawled on the floor, dressed in a fine robe, who advises them, "Don't fight—they'll win anyway. You'll fare better if you accept your fate. An' let me tell you a secret about this place. You want something—you gotta take it, from another of us thralls." This "man" is actually a *polymorphed* babau, collaborating with the other demons.

If the PCs begin to prevail against the type IV demons, the chasme and babau join the fight. When the PCs can resist no longer, or when they despair and lay down their arms, these demons strike them several more times, then stop. After this episode, the demons will assess their new "stock." They strip the PCs and imprison them in the Breeding Pen

(described below), hoping they will reproduce. The PCs have to stay there until they find a way to escape.

Demon type IV (4): AC -1; MV 9"/12"; HD 11; hp 55, 50, 60, 65; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; THAC0 8; SA magic, psionics; SD hit only by magical weapons, 65% MR; AL CE

Babau: AC -3; MV 15"; HD 7+14; hp 46; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d4; THAC0 13; SA *darkness*, *fear touch*, *levitate*, *fly dispel magic*, *polymorph self heat metal*, *ray of enfeeblement*; SD half damage from cutting or stabbing, suffers an extra +2 points of damage from iron weapons; AL CE

2. Breeding Pen

This complex is an array of stone huts, painted bright pink. Each hut has a peephole in the roof, and 25 mephits cluster around these holes, looking bored, but occasionally pointing hopefully. Prisoners from Krynn are locked inside, stripped of all clothing. There are no furnishings here except for beds and filthy curtains that give the inmates some privacy from each other, if not from the mephits who eagerly watch through this building's skylights. Warriors from the Battlefield (see page 33) may recover from their wounds at this shelter.

The inmates here receive a great luxury: once per day the fire mephits bring wholesome food and water. After the PCs escape this building, they will probably want to find clothing. The mephits all wear clothes, but they are singed, sized for five-foot-tall beings, and orange plaid in color, with great red ruffles at every opening.

Fire Mephits (20): AC 5; MV 12"/24"; HD 3+1; hp 25 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; THAC0 16; SA fire breath for 1d8+1 points damage, halved by save vs. spell, *heat metal*, *magic missile* (2/day); SD touching one causes one point damage; AL CE

To Nilhila's great disappointment, the prisoners here do not take advantage of their opportunity to reproduce and increase his population of slaves. Only one of them has any desire to—a runny-nosed half-arc, named Ghazbat. Ghaz-



bat is a great warrior, despite his scrawny body and bulbous stomach. He prowls the complex, trying to seduce all females there. This behavior pleases Nilhila greatly, and the cambion Marquis has given Ghazbat several gifts to help him in his affairs.

Ghazbat owns three *philters of love*, which he has been trying to put in someone's food, a *ring of shocking grasp*— and two *freedom pieces*. Ghazbat hopes to purchase romantic favors with these pieces someday, but he has never talked about them since he has no desire to leave or let any potential lover escape. If PCs attack Ghazbat, the mephitis guards try to save him.

Ghazbat: AC 7; MV 12"; F13; hp 90; #AT 1, +2 due to strength; Dmg ring (three discharges/turn) 1d8+6 points of damage per discharge, or unarmed combat at +3 due to Strength; THAC0 8; S 18/75, I 10, W 9, D 17, Cn 15, Ch 8; AL CE.

Five other NPC prisoners live here, trying to remain as private, and distant from Ghazbat, as possible. Two of them are Qualinesti elven women, named Linlathas and Baralis, who feel particularly insulted because humans have seen them in this predicament. No prisoner is more bashful than Braddock, a Knight of Solamnia on Krynn. He will actively oppose any escape attempts unless he is sure that nobody on Krynn will learn about the humiliation he has been through. The Knights already have a sullied reputation and he says that, "All Ansalon would laugh if they heard about my sojourn here. More so if I claimed innocence of . . . anything."

The PCs will find the most help for their plots from Sarah and Elena, two human peasant women who have been caught here. They are sturdy, able, and level-headed.

Qualinesti Women (2): AC 10; MV 12"; F1; hp 3, 4; #AT 1; Dmg unarmed; THAC0 20; AL CG

Human Women (2): AC 10; MV 12"; F1; hp 8, 10; #AT 1; Dmg unarmed; THAC0 20; AL NG

Braddock: AC 10; MV 12"; F3; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg unarmed; THAC0 18; AL LG

3. NEW KRYNN

A crude oval has been outlined in charcoal powder on the eerie white surface of this plain. A pool of tar lies in the center, with a sign reading "ocean" floating in it. This is Nilhila's dream nation, which he hopes to expand until he has built his own continent. Since few humans are available, New Krynn's population has been expanded with fire mephitis. These cruel little beings do not dare anger Nilhila by destroying New Krynn, but they do everything they can to make life here unpleasant.

A blind human crone rules one half of New Krynn. She owns a herd of 20 thunder beasts, which provide the only food for this "world." Her eyes stare blankly. Her black dress is always worn backward. In this realm, vision is considered a form of hallucination, and all the mephitis here have had their eyes gouged out. If the PCs do anything that proves that they can see, the Blind Queen will order them blinded.

The other half of New Krynn is controlled by a young deaf man, who owns a spring of water. He considers hearing witchcraft, and he insists that anyone who shows signs of noticing sound be deafened with an icepick. His 20 mephitis have all undergone this treatment. They will try to trick the newcomers into proving that they can hear by sneaking up behind PCs and making sudden noises. This forces the victims to make Wisdom Checks on 1d20 or jump, thus revealing their ability to hear.

The Blind Queen has no water, while the Deaf King owns nothing to eat. They both survive by sponsoring desperate raids against each other. The King and Queen let their mephitis do this fighting, while the leaders devote their time to developing artistic talents. Both of them hope to make the Abyss more inhabitable with art.

The Blind Queen and Deaf King are at war. Their troops fight on the Battlefield (see this page) under a set of rules prescribed by Nilhila. PCs may want to unite them, to find *freedom pieces*, or merely get both food and water safely, but this can only be accomplished by finding

some art form that both rulers appreciate. Currently, the Deaf King does not value anything except paintings, while the Blind Queen enjoys only music.

The Blind Queen owns a harp of such exquisite quality that it is worth 2,000 gp. She also has three *freedom pieces*, which she understands but is unable to use because she cannot see the intricate locking mechanism. The Deaf King owns a set of paints, five paintings worth 500 gp each, and also has a set of three *freedom pieces*. He does not know how to use them, since they cannot be explained in his rudimentary sign language. Each ruler commands a force of 20 fire mephitis. The Blind Queen and her mephitis only suffer a -2 on all attack rolls because they are proficient at blind-fighting.

Thunder Beasts (50): AC 4; MV 9"/18" charge; HD 4+4; hp 20 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; THAC0 15; SA fog cloud breath, trample for 4d4 points damage; SD stink causes -2 on attacks; AL N

Blind Queen: AC 10; MV 12"; MU5; hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; S 12, I 17, W 8, D 10, Cn 11, Ch 15; THAC0 20; AL LN; dagger, spells *armor*, *magic missile* (x3), *ESP*, *locate object*, *fireball*.

Deaf King: AC 1; MV 6"; F6; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1; S 17, I 10, W 8, D 15, Cn 11, Ch 12; THAC0 16; AL LN.

Fire Mephitis (40): AC 5; MV 12"/24"; HD 3+1; hp 15 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; THAC0 16; SA fire breath for 2-9 points damage, halved by save vs. spell, *heat metal*, *magic missile* (2/day); SD touching one causes one point damage; AL CE

4. Battlefield

A futile war rages here. It is fought on a high mound where troops of the Blind Queen charge up one side to fight soldiers of the Deaf King coming up the other side. They fight by rolling boulders upslope. These stones are intended to crush the forces climbing the other side, but usually the rocks collide and tumble back, sending both warriors running from their own weapons. Since each ruler has only ten human subjects, Nilhila has assigned a group of demons to swell these



armies. Both the Blind Queen and Deaf King rule a military force of ten human mercenaries and 30 dretch. There are several unused boulders that the PCs are expected to roll into battle. In these fights, each PC receives one opponent (there is a 40% chance of the opponent being human and a 60% chance of it being a dretch).

Dretch (60): AC 2; MV 9" (3" with rock); HD 4; hp 14 each; #AT 1; Dmg see below; THAC0 15; SA will not use them; MR 30%, *teleport* (1/day); AL CE

Human Warriors (20): AC 5; MV 12" (3" with rock); F6; hp 35 each; #AT 1; Dmg see following; THAC0 16; S 15; AL N; chain mail

Each side has one babau, armed with a two-handed sword, who acts as a captain for that side. These leaders devour any dretch casualties. The humans, however, are precious, and if a human warrior seems near death, the babau will fly over the Battlefield, snatch him to safety, and take the warrior to the Breeding Pen. If any fighter cheats by fleeing or using weapons other than boulders, the captain attacks in fury.

Babau (2): AC -3; MV 15'; HD 7+14; hp 60 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d 10+7; SA *darkness, fear touch, levitate, fly, dispel magic, polymorph self, heat metal, ray of enfeeblement*; SD half damage from cutting or stabbing, suffers an extra +2 points from iron weapons; AL CE

When PCs fight in these boulder duels, have each character and his opponent make a bend bars/lift gates roll on each pass. When a roll succeeds, the attacker inflicts 3d6 points of damage on his opponent. Assume that dretch have a Strength of 16 for these purposes. After two turns of this battle, PCs become fatigued, as described in the WSG, and must roll their Constitution or below on 1d20 every turn to avoid suffering a -2 penalty to all abilities. Fatigued characters also suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls. When a second check fails, the character becomes exhausted and requires another Constitution Check for each round of movement. Each hour of rest lets a character attempt another Constitution Check. When one succeeds, the

character is rested, regaining normal powers and ability scores.

Whenever a PC vanquishes an enemy, he can spend 1d10 rounds at the top of the hill before another enemy arrives. Each round of searching the white dust will provide the PC with assorted fragments of demon bone and 1d10 copper pieces. There is a 10% chance each round, noncumulative, that the PC finds one of the five brass sets of handcuffs. These are *freedom pieces*, which the PCs will need to escape.

5. Bodak

The white light fades to blackness here. Nilhila's power has ebbed. On the fringes of Nilhila's realm lives a bodak, the remains of a Dragon Highlord who was trapped by Berem's curse. He uncovered a temporary conduit to lower layers and went downward, hoping to be rescued by his Dark Queen. Instead, he found a plane of total evil and was transmuted into this pearly-skinned humanoid. Since then, he has stolen two *freedom pieces*, which he wears around his wrists. They can no longer help him, for Jasla would never let a bodak leave the Abyss. The bodak attacks anyone who approaches it, lamenting its fate. It carries a great halberd.

Bodak(1): AC 5; MV 6"; HD 9+9; hp 70; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; THAC0 12; SA gaze, victim must save vs. death or die; SD immune to *charm, hold, sleep*, and slow, can only be wounded by iron or magical weapons; AL CE

6. Nilhila's Palace

From the distance, this palace looks like a fortress of some textured material, perhaps brick, or woven metal bands. When the PCs come closer, they see that the palace is made of gray vipers that twist their bodies together in soft knots, forming walls. The snakes do not attack unless Nilhila orders them to, but when they fight, their number is infinite, for all practical purposes. There are four major rooms in this fortress: the Guest House, Nilhila's Apartment, the Garrison, and the Fastness. Nilhila will order the snakes to form different closets and defenses as

he desires. They can shape themselves into rooms, walls, or furnishings at a speed of ten cubic feet/ turn.

Vipers (Thousands): AC 6; MV 15"; HD 2+1; hp 10 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1+ poison, save or suffer 3d4 extra points damage; AL N

6a. guest house

An ambassador from Takhisis dwells in this tower. This is Nonocula, a shadow dragon, and he bullies Nilhila without mercy. The snakes on the walls here have all been clawed and chewed, but none of them dare take revenge. If Takhisis chose, she could destroy Nilhila and his whole realm. Takhisis has been considering just that ever since one of her Dragon Highlords was kidnapped and later became a bodak. Nilhila appeased her only by promising to make and distribute the *freedom pieces*, establishing a way for valiant prisoners to leave the Abyss. This suited Takhisis since she always enjoys putting her servants through grueling tests. Nonocula has a bed of 1,000 steel coins, and the water in his trough has the effect of three *potions of healing*. Five wraiths act as his bodyguards.

Nonocula's first impulse will be to kill intruding PCs, and he may even breathe on them once before he thinks better of it. He actually wants their help. When Nilhila agreed to make the *freedom pieces*, neither the dragon nor the cambion thought of Jasla. Now, after considering matters, Nonocula realizes that if another of Takhisis's favorites is captured, Takhisis would blame him for letting Nilhila continue his trapping. So the dragon hopes that the PCs will escape, and, in doing so, show him a way to slip past Jasla. If the PCs need assistance, he will give them information about the *freedom pieces*, and reveal to them that the *portal stake* is in Nilhila's Fasting.

Shadow Dragon (1): AC -2; MV 18"/24"; HD 6+6; hp 52; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/3d4; THAC0 13; SA breath blinds and drains 75% of all levels for eight turns, save to lose only 50%, awe power, cast the following spells once/day: *darkness, spook, blindness, deafness, continual darkness, paralyzation,*

dispel magic, confusion; MR 20%; AL NE

Wraiths (5): AC 4; MV 12"/24"; HD 5+3; hp 25 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; THAC0 15; SA energy drain; SD hit only by silver/magic weapons, immune to some spells, poison, and paralysis, clerics turn as if two levels lower; AL CE

6B. Nihila's apartment

Kender will love this room since maps hang everywhere. Snakes dangle some from their fangs, while others have been clamped between serpentine bodies, and more lie in piles on the floor. The maps are worth 500 steel pieces altogether and show Krynn at many stages of its development. These maps have been marked with historical notes, as well as notes on ways in which these places will be simulated in New Krynn as its people multiply.

A *necklace of missiles*, which once belonged to the Deaf King, has been wedged between two snakes, who will fight to defend it. The necklace has two two-dice missiles, two three-dice missiles, and one six-dice missile. Nihila pledged to give this to Nonocula, but now he is stalling, hoping to find a way to withdraw the promise.

Nilhila looks like a normal, even handsome, man except that his skin is bright red and both his teeth and nails appear black. The cambion spends most of his time at the top of his great tower made of vipers, surveying his lands and brooding. He wants more subjects. The Breeding Pen has not provided any births, and his attempts to stimulate men to virility through battle have also failed.

Throughout this demon's childhood, his mother, a good-aligned witch who had been deluded by a creature she mistakenly summoned, told him of the glories of humanity and did her best to banish his demon side. Nilhila decided that instead of adapting himself to kynn, he would adapt beings from Krynn to the Abyss. He began this experiment by having his mother *teleport* them both to this Abyssal layer, where he devoured her. Nilhila thinks of himself as benevolent, in a cynical way. Since people on Krynn constantly fight, he has given his subjects a war. Since men and woman on Krynn yearn for each other, he has

forced those in his realm to be together. The blind and the deaf on Krynn have been oppressed, so he has let the blind and deaf rule here.

If the PCs attack Nilhila, he escapes while the snakes defend him. Five snakes attack each PC; whenever one serpent dies, another takes its place. As the battle goes on, Nilhila's other snakes will corral the PCs into as small an area as possible, building walls at ten cubic feet per turn. PCs can hack away one cubic foot of snake per 10 points damage. Nilhila carries a *medallion of ESP* wields a long sword, wears eyes of the *eagle*, and has a *potion of invulnerability*. While the PCs fight his snakes, Nilhila retreats to his Garrison and then prepares to defend the Fasting.

Nilhila, Cambion Marquis: AC 2; MV 15"; HD 16; hp 90; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2; THAC0 7; S 17, I 13, W 15, D 15, Cn 15, Ch 10; SA *fear touch*, magic; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL CE

6C. Garrison

A flock of demons that Nilhila has coerced into his service act as troops here. They will not attack humans who come into their quarters unless Nilhila orders them to, because slaves are their most precious possessions. Each demon has an exalted title and insists on being addressed by it. These creatures become murderous if anyone forgets their titles. When Nilhila controls a world, these demons will rule it for him. There are 16 rutterkin here, with titles of High Lord, Puissant Sire, Majesty, The Great, Hero, Imperator, Lord Duke, High Count, Viscount, Pfalzgraf, Herzog, High Margrave, Rajah, Padishah, Thane, and High Freiherr. They have 500 steel pieces among them and a *potion of delusion*, which seems to be a *potion of invulnerability*.

Rutterkin (16): AC 1; MV 12"; HD 5+1; hp 23 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+1 (saw-toothed sword), or 1d6+2 (throwing blade, 15" range); THAC0 15; SA *darkness, fear touch, fly, telekinetic* 1000 gp weight, *teleport* (1/day); MR 40%; AL CE

6D. fasting

This tower is bare stone, except for a dais of snakes with five steps, leading up to an obsidian post—the *portal stake*. When a character tries to climb the dais, he sinks into the morass of serpents and must fight 200 of them. Unless the PCs use some sort of magic to destroy all the snakes at once, they will probably lose several party members. Nilhila will not intervene in this battle. When the snakes have been defeated, and the party chains its members to the *portal stake*, they may attempt to flee the Abyss.

The escape

After the PCs reach the *portal stake*, and obtain enough *freedom pieces* for everybody that they plan to escape with, they may begin their attempt. Once all the fugitives are chained, the party comes into contact with Berem again. Dagniel has bought him a private room at the Inn, but he is lying awake on the floor beside the bed, unused as he is to mattresses. This time, characters can talk with Berem directly. The Everman will explain, "My sister guards the passage.... Yes, she would help you...but I must speak with...her first. One of you...may direct me. Remember the...altar and the key."

After this, let the PCs select one character to role-play Berem on the shadow Prime Material plane. This character must concentrate completely, doing nothing except for communicating with Berem. As before, if Berem dies, he sends another character to the Abyss, and he can only speak five words per round. The next two encounters run simultaneously. Berem, as a PC, must build the altar, under the direction of one PC. At the same time, the others have to fend off Nihila and the troops from his garrison.

First of all, the PC controlling Berem must find enough flowers to build a magnificently huge altar. A ragged girl sells flowers on a street corner, but the amount Berem needs will cost one steel piece, even after she has made her most generous offer. At this time, he has 100 copper coins, a fortune to him, but not enough. The PC who is in contact with Berem can make him



steal, but the Everman will complain bitterly – theft brought the curse down on him. Treat all victims as ordinary NPCs, described under Berem's Communes, unless otherwise mentioned. If Berem allows any noise during a robbery, have 3d8 town guards intervene. When the flower girl sees that Berem cannot pay, she first becomes desolate. Then she has an idea: she knows a man named Adam Malory who might make a loan. The girl drags Berem toward his shanty, babbling about Adam's generosity.

Flower Girl: AC 10; MV 12"; 0-level; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (small knife); AL NG

Adam surveys Berem with cool, dark eyes and decides that Berem would not be able to repay such a loan. He proposes a gambling match. Adam pulls a handful of wooden poker chips from his leather vest and barks out the following rules. He will conceal a number of chips between one and 100 in his hand, and when Berem guesses how many he has, he will give him a steel piece. Each guess costs five copper pieces, and for ten cp, Adam will tell whether an incorrect guess was high or low. He smoothly adds that the flower girl may check to see if he has told the truth.

Use percentile dice to find out what number of chips he holds. Adam will not actually cheat, but he certainly does not expect a half-wit to figure out how many chips he has. He has a bag of ten steel pieces in his shanty.

Adam: AC 7; MY 12"; T6; hp 35; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); THAC0 20; S 10, I 11, W 9, D 17, Cn 13, Ch 12; AL LE

The iron key needed for the altar top would normally cost three steel pieces, but, if the PCs think of it, Berem can use the key to his inn room. He must build the altar in a room where one of the PCs slept, but these rooms are all occupied again. The PC controlling Berem may choose to have him disturb a scribe, a sleeping bailiff, or one of the members of a group of Seeker pilgrims.

Berem may use any method that seems appropriate to obtain one of these rooms, but any noisy fight will bring the innkeeper and five inn servants. Should Berem defeat them, he will be arrested, and hanged if he killed anybody. Either fate will force him to flee to another town, locate another analog

of the Fourth Moon Inn, and make another attempt at building the altar, starting from the beginning.

Innkeeper: AC 10; MV 12"; 0th-level; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg unarmed; THAC0 20; AL LG

Servants (5): AC 10; MV 12"; 0th-level; hp 6 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); THAC0 20; AL LG

The scribe has converted his room into an impromptu office. There he is engraving a Certificate of Commission to be presented to a new lord's seneschal. If anybody troubles him, he will demand three copper pieces for his wasted time. The bailiff lies in bed, recovering from his debauchery of the previous night. He attacks anyone who disturbs him, shouting slurred insults. A retreat will prevent any major altercation.

Only the Seekers will be interested in Berem. They hope that he will provide some religious insight, but they become gradually more suspicious as they learn more about his altar and attempts to contact the Abyss.

If Berem was executed previously in this town, one of the Seekers recognizes him and, understandably enough, accuses Berem of witchcraft. The Seekers are not yet powerful enough to have Berem arrested without proof, but soon afterward, five Seekers step into Berem's room. They are armed with saps and want to stun Berem, carry him out to a deserted spot in the countryside, then burn him at the stake. If the Seekers do not interfere with Berem, he will be able to complete his ritual and contact Jasla.

Scribe: AC 10; MV 12"; 0th-level; hp 2; #AT 1; Dmg unarmed; THAC0 20; AL LN

Bailiff: AC 5; MV 12"; F6; hp 35; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1; THAC0 16; S 16, I 11, W 12, D 16, Cn 11, Ch 9; AL LN; leather armor, club

Seekers (6): AC 5; MV 9"; C1; hp 6 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 + 50% chance of stunning; THAC0 20; S 10; AL LE; chain mail, saps, maces

Nilhila needs only two turns to muster his rutterkin and arrive. If, for whatever reason, the PCs have not been chained when he arrives, he will delay his attack until all are fettered. After the characters

are all shackled together, Nilhila has all the rutterkin from his garrison attack them, trying to capture PCs when possible, or to kill them if capture is too difficult. The cambion Marquis will not personally fight unless he must. *Freedom pieces* have long enough chains so that a character can move his hands freely, but they keep any one person from walking more than three feet out of line. With one round of coordinated movement, a whole section of chained PCs might rotate on their axis. The person controlling Berem cannot move, so it would be wise for the PCs to choose someone near the inside for this role.

When Berem has built the altar, and the fugitives break their chains, the ground quakes beneath them. At the same time everyone notices a tiny, expanding point of light—the portal. A brown-haired young girl, Jasla, stands at the center of this hole, and she steps aside to let the PCs pass. From the depths of the Abyss, shimmering hordes of demons approach, but Jasla waves them back. As PCs leave the Abyss, they hear Nilhila's bitter laughter. He says, "And you are all completely pure, innocent as kittens. Really? Let me see what I remember." Using his *medallion of ESP* Nilhila can learn what the PCs have done in their adventures. He recites each dishonest or violent deed the PCs have committed in this adventure (or before it). If they stole food, or had Berem rob, he recounts that. If they killed humans, he describes their action in shocking detail.

A special curse has been prepared for those who cannot answer Nilhila's accusations, who cannot justify their actions. Such characters must wear the *freedom piece* forever. The chain has been broken, so it will not hamper the character's daily life, but the corroded manacle can never come off. Memories of horror, and of the crimes it drives people to, will haunt the character. Whenever that PC shows cruelty to the destitute, or demands merciless justice for an enemy, the manacle tightens, inflicting 1 point of damage that cannot be healed. As DM, you may decide which PC justifications will prevent this curse, and how NPCs react to manacled characters. The PCs have escaped the Abyss. But its legacy may remain with them.

This adventure, for 6-8 characters of 3d-5th level, takes place in the year 353 AC, several months after the War of the Lance has ended. Player characters may be of any acceptable Krynn character class, but a majority of fighters will prove helpful. Characters should be of good or neutral alignment. If more or fewer characters are used than the recommended number, the opposing forces should be adjusted accordingly. Ideally, characters should have participated in some part of the War of the Lance and have an understanding of the background and politics of the world of Krynn. The main scenario takes place on the isle of Mithas. In the beginning, the PCs are stationed on Karthay, but this may be changed to suit your particular campaign. They should, however, begin the adventure from a location in the area surrounding the Blood Sea of Istar.

DM Information

Mithas and its sister island Kothas are located in the northern section of Krynn, northeast of the continent of Ansalon and the Blood Sea of Istar. The population of the 320-square-mile island is predominately minotaur, but small tribes of ogres, half-ogres, giants, and goblins can be found dwelling in the high mountains that run through the center of Mithas.

As a sea-faring race, the minotaurs have established all their large communities along the coast. Out of the almost 20,000 minotaurs that live on Mithas, over half reside in Nethosak, the capital.

The seasons of Mithas range from long, hot summers to short, very mild winters. In between are periods of heavy rainfalls and an occasional tropical storm. Most vegetation is of the tropical variety and the animal life ranges from parrots, monkeys, and lizards along the tropical coasts to wild dogs, elk, and sheep in the more mountainous regions.

Minotaurs of Mithas

The minotaurs of Mithas are imposing figures, standing over seven feet tall with massive muscles and bull-like faces. Their bodies are covered with a short, coarse fur ranging in coloring from black to dark reddish-brown. Curved horns protrude from the sides of their foreheads. Because of the predominately hot climate on the island, their only concession to clothing is a short leather skirt and a thick leather harness that holds their weapons.

The belief that "might makes right" is the cornerstone of minotaur society. All disputes are settled by contests of strength and leaders are chosen by their combat ability in an arena referred to as the Circus. The minotaurs are governed by an emperor, who resides in Nethosak, and a Supreme Circle of eight minotaurs that deals with the administration of government. Crime, by the minotaurs' standards, is almost unknown on Mithas. Judgement is swift and the punishment is almost certain death administered by the perpetrator's peers in the Circus.

The widely held belief that minotaurs are descended from ogres is not subscribed to on Mithas. Minotaurs believe that they were the first (and consequently superior) race; their goal in life is to subject all the lesser races to their rule. This philosophy is reflected in the fact that minotaurs will go to any lengths to prove their superiority over others. Piracy is not only sanctioned, but highly condoned and the armies of Mithas are known far and wide for their ruthlessness in battle. One of the most heinous crimes a minotaur can commit is to mate with a member of a lesser species.

Although minotaurs claim to be a truly classless society, this is not actually the case. The current emperor, Rethoth, is a black minotaur. Consequently, all minotaurs on the Supreme Circle are black. The brown minotaurs seem to naturally gravitate toward sailing, shipbuilding, and piracy, while the ranks of the army seem to be composed almost entirely of red minotaurs.

DM's Background

The period following the War of the Lance was a time of great upheaval. Treaties were made and broken and former friends became deadly enemies. The minotaurs of Mithas, who during the war had formed an uneasy alliance with the Dark Queen's armies, were now reported to be disgruntled with their erstwhile allies. The minotaurs had agreed to ally with the evil Dragonarmies under the assumption that the bull-men would receive the conquered lands surrounding the Blood Sea of Istar. From there they planned to spread their rule throughout the entire continent of Ansalon.

After seeing how the army of Paladine, led by a group of so-called heroes, had managed to halt the plans of the Dark Queen, Rethoth decided to meet with representatives of the good armies to see if the minotaurs' goals might be easier to accomplish by allying with the victors.

A ship was sent to Karthay to request that an envoy journey to Mithas to meet with Rethoth and the Circle of Eight, the ruling body of the island. The minotaurs would listen to the representatives, and then make their decision on whether or not a treaty could be drawn up.

Not one to play favorites, Rethoth also summoned draconian representatives of the Black Dragonarmy to Mithas to voice his displeasure with them and give them a final chance to prove their worth.

Rethoth's plan was simple. He would hear from both sides and then let them prove themselves by subjecting them to a test of strength and courage. Neither group would know of the others' presence on Mithas, for if both groups did well, the deciding factor would be a duel to the death between the two parties in the Circus.



Player's Background

(To be read aloud to the players)

Standing on the bow of the large wooden sailing ship, you catch your first glimpse of the green tropical island known as Mithas. As the vessel's minotaur crew begins preparations for landing, you think back on what an honor it was for your party to be chosen as the representatives of the forces of good in the negotiations with the minotaurs of Mithas.

You were summoned into the council chambers of Karthay. There you came face-to-face with a huge, brown-furred, bull-faced creature introduced by the council as Demetis, an ambassador from Mithas. After you found your seats, Demetis approached the podium and in a deep gravely voice repeated his reasons, this time for your benefit, for addressing the council.

It is common knowledge on krynn that the minotaurs are aligned with the Black Dragonarmies. However, Demetis revealed his emperor's extreme displeasure with this alliance, based on events of the past few months. If the council agrees, the emperor wants to give them a chance to send envoys to Mithas to meet with the emperor and the Supreme Circle. The emperor wants to learn if perhaps the minotaurs' purpose might be better served by aligning themselves with the armies of good. Whoever the council chooses as representatives will be subjected to a simple test of strength and endurance to determine if they will make worthy allies for the minotaurs. If they make a good showing in the test, the minotaurs will be more than willing to consider severing ties with the evil Dragonarmies and trying to arrive at a new treaty.

After the minotaur finished his speech, all eyes in the chamber turned in your direction.

"Now you see why we have summoned you," said Belos, leader of the council. "Based on your past deeds, we feel you are the perfect choices to represent us in front of the minotaurs

of Mithas. To gain such mighty warriors on our side would be quite an accomplishment. Will you agree to make the journey?"

Naturally you agreed. Leaving the chamber to gather your gear, you boarded the Mithian ship docked at the harbor.

Now your seaward journey is almost at an end as the tall white spires of Nethosak come into view. Not knowing what to expect, your stomachs flutter nervously, but you secure your gear and prepare to face whatever lies ahead like the heroes you are.

Chapter 1: The Palace at Nethosak

a Meeting with The emperor

After disembarking from the ship, the PCs are lead by four minotaur guards, armed with spears, to the doors of the emperor's palace. The palace, constructed of gleaming white sandstone, rises several stories above the island and is topped by a multitude of circular spires. At the door the characters are ordered to relieve themselves of any weapons and to remove their footgear before entering. The floors of the palace are covered in thick gold carpeting and the walls are festooned with rich tapestry. Minotaur guards stand at attention every few feet along the corridor leading to the heavy gold doors of the inner chamber. If the PCs try to talk to the guards, they get no reaction.

Behind the gold double-doors you see an enormous cathedral-like chamber filled with statues, paintings, and other objects of art. At the far end of the circular room, a huge black-furred minotaur is sitting on a raised silver throne. The minotaur is draped in a regal purple velvet robe and his curving two-foot-long horns are gilded in gold. In front of the throne, seated at a polished oval table of inlaid marble are eight more black minotaurs. Approximately two dozen guards are

stationed at intervals along the curved walls. As you stare in amazement, your escorts push you to your knees and whisper in a harsh voice, "Bow you fools, that's the emperor."

Rethoth will demand that the PCs show him all the respect he feels his position deserves. Once he is satisfied that they are properly humbled, he invites them into the room. Once inside, the PCs must remain standing. Only those on the Supreme Council are allowed to sit at the table.

After introducing the council, Rethoth asks the PCs to identify themselves in turn and relate some of their past deeds. As each introduction is made, the speaker is subjected to snorts and disdainful looks from the council. Once the characters have completed their introductions, Rethoth will give his speech.

Rethoth's Speech

I know most of you creatures think of us as a vicious, blood-thirsty race. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have our destiny just as I'm sure you have yours. Ours is to rule. In the past we have tried to do this peacefully, but situations being what they are, we were forced to ally with the legions of the Black Dragonarmy in order to further our goals. Now it seems we were a little hasty in our decision. We are well aware of the severe blow dealt the Dragonarmies by your kinsmen and the cowardly way the Dragonarmies retreated when they thought the battle was lost. We have no wish to be associated with those who would run at the first whiff of danger.

Still, you must admit that your customs and beliefs are quite different from ours. We have invited you here to learn more about your kind and to see if it would be in our best interests to join with you. But we will not ally ourselves with anyone who cannot prove themselves, for above all else we value strength and courage. Therefore I have



arranged a little test to examine the mettle of our perhaps future allies.

In the mountains east of the city lives a tribe of ogres. It has come to my attention that a certain renegade minotaur has infiltrated this tribe and is using it as a base to gather other renegade minotaurs to his cause. The cause itself is laughable, for he proposes that our governing bodies should be chosen by the will of the people, and that problems should be dealt with in a court of law instead of the arena. Naturally my people would never go along with these preposterous ideas. No, it is not his puny band of renegades that concerns me. It is the man himself I am interested in.

You see, he has been described by those who have met him as having golden fur. In the entire history of our race, such a thing has never occurred. If this is true, he would be the first of his kind. My wish is to meet with him and learn more about him. Your task is to journey to the ogre village and persuade him to come back with you to Nethosak. Let me assure you that no harm will come to him. I merely want to satisfy my curiosity. I have tried to approach the village with my own men, but the villagers flee when they sense our approach. You, as inferiors, should have better luck.

I will warn you that the journey to the mountains may be dangerous. Dire wolves and other creatures are known to make their homes there. Also you will be on your honor not to harm any minotaur you may encounter. The penalty for that would be instant death. You will each be given a medallion with my markings to insure your safe passage through my lands. Other than that you are on your own. If you succeed in bringing the man to me, you will have passed the test and your people and mine can begin negotiations. If you fail, you will be sent home and all ties will be severed. If you choose not to undertake the test, you will be sent home immediately. Well, what is your answer?

Rethoth's Plot

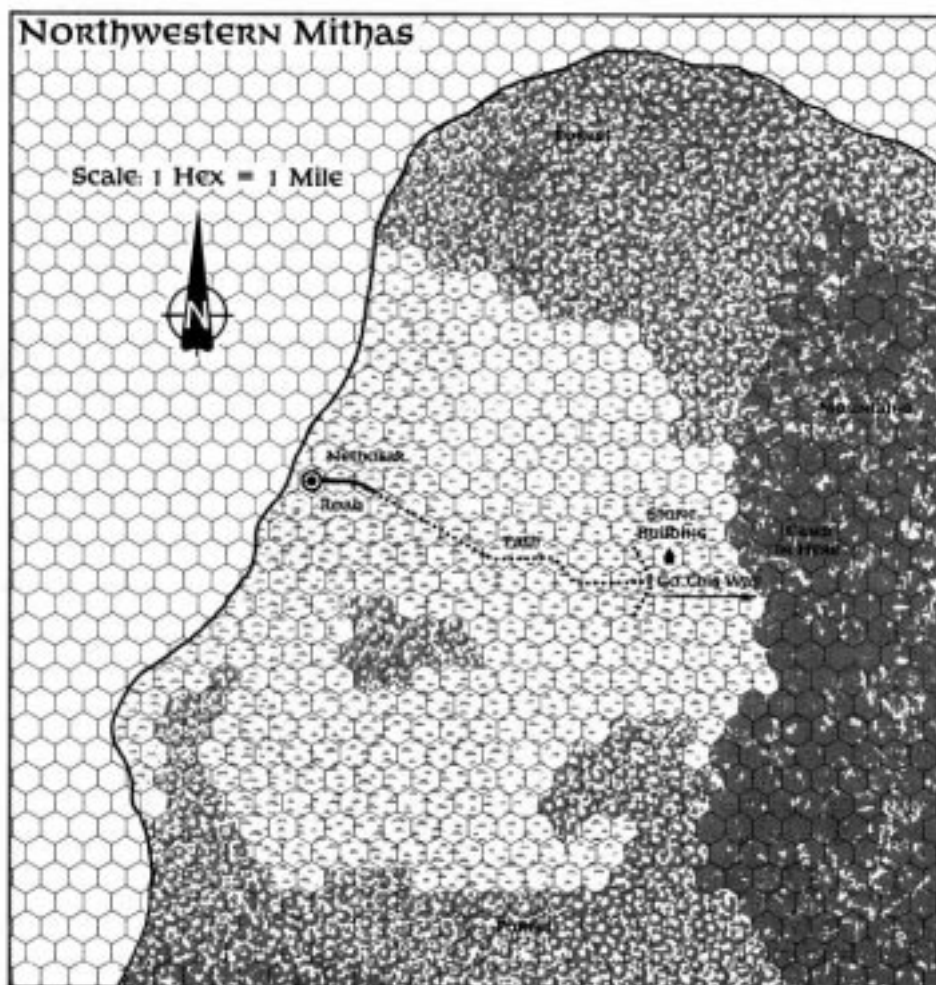
Rethoth was not being entirely truthful with the party. He wants the golden minotaur for only one reason, to kill him. The stories that have reached his ears about the yellow-furred creature have also hinted at his origin. It is said that the golden minotaur was the result of a mating between a minotaur and an ogre. Such a creature is an abomination to the minotaurs' ways of thinking, and Rethoth is determined to have it destroyed.

While the party meets with Rethoth, a group of six Kapak draconians waits in another chamber. After the PCs leave, the draconians are granted an audience with the emperor. After expressing his

displeasure with their alliance, and threatening to break their treaty, Rethoth offers them the same challenge, with a few slight differences.

The Kapaks are told to kill the golden minotaur and bring its head to Rethoth. In addition, they are warned that a group of adventurers has been spotted on the island. If the Kapaks find these characters, they are to kill them. After agreeing to the terms, the draconians are given their map and medallions and sent on their way. The paths Rethoth chose for each group to follow are purposely dangerous. He wants to make sure that only the strongest win the contest.

Rethoth the Minotaur: AC 2; MV 12"; FTR 15; hp 91; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4 or by





weapon type; THAC0 6; S 19, I 14, W 16, D 17, Cn 16, Ch 15; AL LE

Minotaur Guards (30): AC 4; MV 12'; FTR 5; hp 42 each; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d6; THAC0 16; AL LE

Chapter 2: The Road To Ogre Mountain

As the PCs exit the palace, they are led to a stable where a group of young minotaurs is saddling a horse for each of them. The party is provided with saddlebags containing food and water for themselves and the horses. No other items are available except for those they brought with them. Mounting their steeds and riding out of town, they notice that even the youngest of the minotaurs greet their passage with a haughty sneer.

Playing The Draconians

Although the six Kapaks are traveling a different path, they will experience basically the same events as the PCs until their paths merge at Encounter 4. To discover how the draconians fared at each encounter, roll 1d100 and compare the results to the table below. To simplify matters, this roll should be made every time the PCs have an encounter.

Draconian Encounter Table (Roll 1d100)

01-44	Enemy killed or routed. No damage suffered.
45-60	Each Kapak takes damage. Roll 1d6 for each party member.
61-69	One Kapak takes 1d10 damage. Choose randomly.
70-77	One Kapak killed. Choose randomly.
78-82	Encounter avoided.
83-93	Half of party takes 1d8 damage. Choose randomly.
94-100	Each Kapak takes 1 point of damage.

Kapak (6): AC 4; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 3; hp 23, 22, 19, 19, 17, 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 16; SA Poison; SD Acid Pool; AL LE

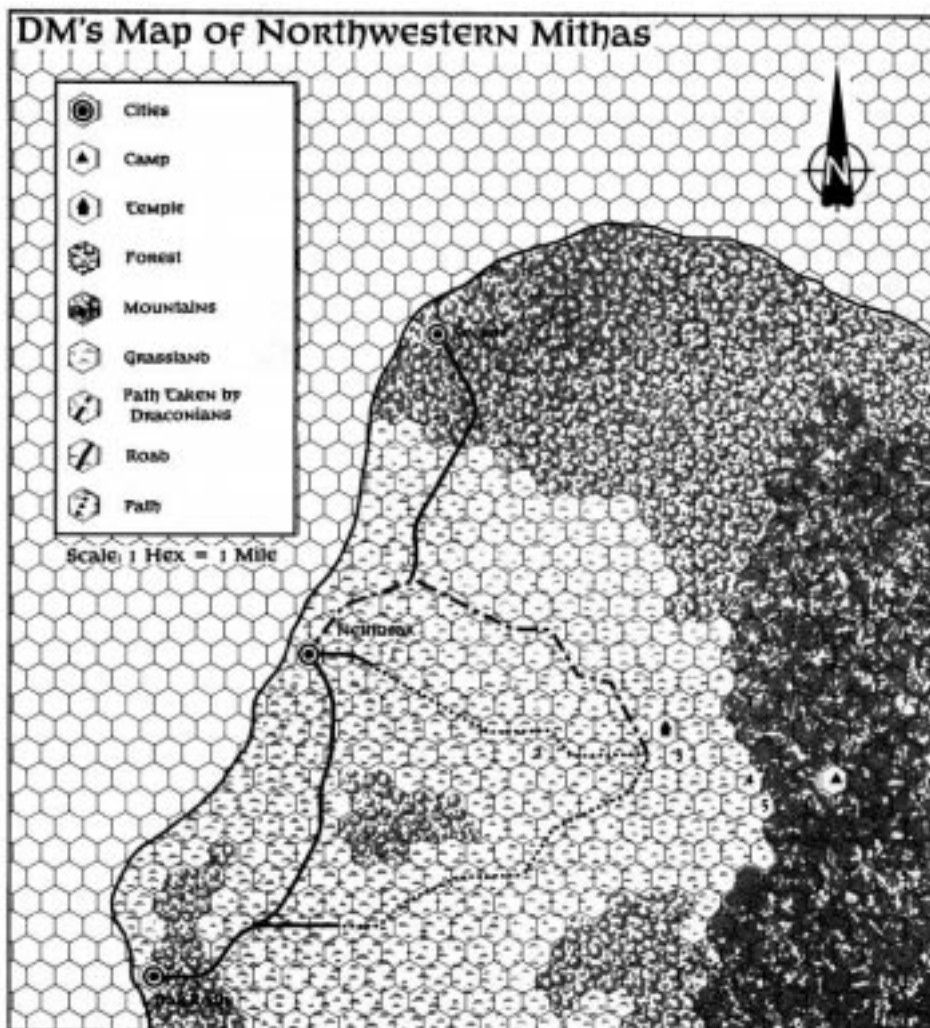
ENCOUNTER #1—Minotaurs

As you make your way out of the bustling metropolis, past a huge circular arena that could only be the Circus, the stone road turns into a dirt path and the tall buildings are replaced by thick grasses and stout flat-leaved trees. The air is very warm, but the thick limbs overhanging the path provide some measure of shade. You pass several small farms with fields of thick hemp and then you see, lying in the road directly ahead, a still figure.

As you ride closer, you can make out the figure of a female minotaur dressed in leather skirt and vest. The figure is not moving.

This is actually a clever ambush set up by Rethoth to test the party. If they dismount and approach the female (who is faking unconsciousness), four male minotaurs armed with swords burst from the grasses on the side of the road and accuse the group of molesting the female. The male minotaurs do all they can to provoke the party, short of attacking them. If they are shown the medallions, they accuse the PCs of thievery as well. If the characters ignore the minotaurs and ride on, the four males help the female to her feet and fade back into the undergrowth. If the PCs attack the minotaurs, all five minotaurs return the attack.

Minotaurs (5): AC 4; MV 12'; FTR 3; hp 23 each; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d8; THAC0 18; AL LE



ENCOUNTER #2—HUNTING HOUNDS

You've been traveling for a few hours now with no more company than the flocks of brightly plumed parrots that seem to precede you on your journey. The heavy green vegetation that once threatened to choke off your path has now grown considerably sparser. The road begins a noticeable climb as off in the distance you catch glimpses of the majestic stone peaks of the central mountains of Mithas.

Suddenly your thoughts are brutally interrupted as an ungodly howling noise slices through the brush on your right and a pack of eight coal-black hounds burst onto the road.

The hounds are war dogs trained by in Nethosak to fight. They are garbed in light studded leather armor and spiked collars. The hounds were placed along the path by order of Rethoth and given orders to attack any non-minotaur passersby. The war dogs are extremely loyal to the minotaurs and ferocious in their attack. Their first attacks will be against the horses, seeking to drag them down and dismount their riders.

War Dogs (8): AC 6; MV 12"; HD 2+2; hp 14, 13, 13, 11, 10, 9, 9, 7; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; THAC0 16; AL N

Light Warhorses (4-8): AC 7; MV 24"; HD 2; hp 11 each; #AT 1d4/1d4; THAC0 16; AL N

ENCOUNTER #3—Spectral Minions

After a distance of several more miles, the road branches off to the north and south, heading for parts unknown. Your journey, however, still leads east and you must now find your own path. Your mounts step warily over the rocky landscape, trying to avoid the thick vines and creepers that crisscross the ground. Large boulders and piles of rubble give mute testimony to the cataclysmic forces that once ravaged

the land. Ahead you spy one particularly odd-shaped pile of stone. Drawing closer, you see that it appears to be the ruins of a old temple.

Large slabs of precariously balanced white granite and toppled marble columns are all that remain of the former temple of Habbakuk, built by the original inhabitants of this area. The temple is approximately 60 feet long on each side, and approximately 40 feet high, although large sections of the ceiling are collapsed. The gold-leafed double-doors that once sealed the temple now lay askew on weakened hinges. Thick green vines snake along the outer walls, climbing to the roof.

During the Age of Twilight, when the minotaurs began gathering in the eastern region of Istar, the temple was overthrown and dedicated to the god Sargas. The former inhabitants were forced into slavery or killed. Then with the coming of the Cataclysm, the temple was destroyed and again abandoned. Now the minotaurs studiously avoid this location, fearing the spectral minions that haunt the ruins.

As you approach the two shattered marble columns that once flanked the entryway to the temple, a shimmering haze seems to form in front of the doorway. Either your eyes are playing tricks on you, or you now see ten transparent human figures, brandishing ghostly maces, blocking your path.

The figures are guardian spectral minions. These are the spirits of the original inhabitants of the temple who were slain fighting the minotaurs. When the temple was destroyed in the Cataclysm, their spirits were charged with guarding the precious artifact that still lies within.

The spectral minions must stay within 1,000 yards of the temple; they demand that the PCs give them the correct password to enter the temple. They do not attack unless the characters try to force their way within. Their mission is to guard the *staff of striking/curing* hidden within the temple altar.

If the PCs fight the minions and gain

entry to the temple, or if a spell is cast to remove their curse, read the following:

The interior of the stone building is in as much disarray as the exterior. Rows of stone pews lie smashed to rubble under the weight of chunks of dislodged ceiling. Directly ahead of you lies a cracked oblong slab of pink marble, presumably a former altar. A huge piece of ceiling lies on top of the altar, its weight having split the altar in two.

If the characters examine the altar, they catch a glimpse of a glowing wooden staff embedded deep in the cracked stone. The staff is a *staff of striking/curing*, combining the powers of a *staff of striking* and a *staff of curing*; it is usable by any good cleric. The staff contains 20 charges but recharges itself at the rate of five charges per day when in sunlight, to a maximum of 50 charges.

As a *staff of striking*, it acts as a +3 weapon, inflicting 1d6+3 points of damage per use, without draining a charge. If two charges are expended, the staff can strike for double damage. However, it cannot be used for curing until an hour has passed after a double-damage blow is struck.

As a *staff of curing*, two charges are required for each usage. The staff will cure disease, blindness, or 3d6+3 points of damage with the following limitations: It may only be used once per day on any given individual and only six times in a 24-hour period.

There is nothing else of value in the temple. If the characters try to move the debris, or disturb the walls, there is a cumulative 5 % chance per round that they dislodge the remaining sections of the ceiling. Anyone inside the temple when this occurs suffers 1d4 +1 points of damage for 2-5 rounds (THAC0 15) from falling rock.

Guardian Spectral Minions (10): AC 2; MV 30"; HD 3; hp 15 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +1 with mace; THAC0 16; SD +1 or better to hit; AL N

ENCOUNTER #4—DRACONIANS

You are now entering a region of high rocky cliffs and jagged peaks towering above you and blocking out most of the sunlight. This is the area in which the ogre tribes are said to reside. You remember the minotaur's warning about wolves, and move cautiously through the stony passages.

Suddenly above your heads you hear the flapping of leathery wings and a frightening screech. Descending on your party from the cliff above is a group of wicked-looking draconians.

The draconians have been following the party since they witnessed the encounter at the temple. Waiting for the right moment to attack, they scaled the rocky cliffs and followed the group's progress from above.

The number and statistics of the draconians should be adjusted based on the information given in the "Playing the Draconians" section earlier.

The draconians are of the Kapak race and are armed with long swords. Their saliva is venomous, and before attacking they lick their weapons. Such weapons remain poisoned for three rounds, then the Kapak must take a round to again coat its weapon.

Contact with a Kapak's venom induces a paralysis that lasts for 2d6 turns unless a successful saving throw is made.

When a Kapak is reduced to 0 hit points, its body dissolves into a lo-foot-wide pool of acid. Anyone caught in the area of the acid receives 1d8 points of damage each round he remains there. After 1d6 rounds, the acid evaporates.

The Kapaks do their best to kill the party, but if over half of the attackers are killed, the survivors flee. Their main goal is to capture and kill the golden minotaur, and they do not want to fail in their task.

Any possessions a dead Kapak may have are rendered useless by the acid. If a Kapak is captured and searched, along with his weapon, armor, and 32 steel coins, there is a 30% chance that a map is found that is exactly like the PCs' map, but with a different route marked. A cap-

tured draconian will reveal no information to the party, even under the threat of torture. It does, however, take the first opportunity to spit in its captors' faces with its deadly saliva.

Kapaks (6): AC 4; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 3; hp 23, 22, 19, 19, 17, 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 16; SA poison; SD acid pool; AL LE

ENCOUNTER #5—OGRES

The battle between the draconians and the PCs has drawn the attention of a band of ogres patrolling the area. The ogres are members of the renegade camp (see this page) and are on the lookout for others of their kind that may try to infiltrate their hideout.

They watch the battle until one side or the other has been defeated, and then while the victors are recovering from the battle they make their move.

Before you have a chance to catch your breath or bind your wounds, you find yourselves surrounded by ten large humanoid creatures with lumpy, yellow skin. The creatures, dressed in fur loincloths and carrying stone battle axes, are hideously ugly. These can only be ogres.

The largest ogre in the group grunts at the party in rough common to "surrender or die." The ogres have the group surrounded and will not hesitate to fight if attacked. They would prefer to capture the party alive if possible. The PCs should be made aware that they are outnumbered and the wise choice would be to concede to the ogres' demands.

If the PCs surrender, they are told to drop their weapons and extend their hands. One of the ogres steps forward and binds their hands and eyes with rope and dirty rags, while another tethers the horses together. Once this is accomplished, the party is led on a twisting uphill course to the ogres' campsite.

Ogres (10): AC 5; MV 9" ; FTR 4; hp 31, 30, 29, 26, 25, 25, 23, 16, 13, 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10/1d8 with axe; THAC0 15; ALN

Chapter 3—The Renegades' Camp

The ogres blindfold the PCs and tie their hands before leading them into their camp, secreted in the center of a cluster of knobby hills. Once in the camp, the blindfolds are removed and the PCs can view their surroundings.

You have been led to an encampment nestled in a valley formed by the surrounding hills. There are approximately two dozen wood and thatch dwellings in the encampment. Small children stare at you fearfully from between the legs of their minotaur and ogre mothers; mongrel dogs run yapping and nipping at your legs. A slight pressure on your shoulders steers you to one of the larger dwellings, a wooden hut with a wolfskin covering the entrance.

The camp contains 36 ogres and 24 minotaurs. Of these, 32 are male, 20 are female and 8 are children.

Inside the hut is a tall, golden-furred minotaur flanked by two yellow-skinned ogres. The minotaur is dressed in a short fur skirt and cape and carries a long sword strapped across his chest. Six more brown-furred minotaurs enter the hut, flanking the party. One of the minotaurs steps forward and whispers a few words to the golden minotaur. Turning a piercing gaze on the party, the minotaur tells them to sit and explain their reasons for being in his territory.

The minotaur can readily tell if the party is lying. He knows that they would never have been able to get this far without the approval of the emperor, especially if he notes the medallions around their necks. The PCs should be encouraged to relate the whole story of their adventure, including their meeting with Rethoth and the draconian encounter. After the PCs have given all the information they wish to volunteer, and once the gold minotaur has determined that they are not lying, he will introduce himself.



"I am called Devroc, chosen leader of the tribe. I am sure you find it most strange to see minotaurs and ogres living together, but we are united in a common cause. We are all known as traitors and renegades to our people. Most of us have been sentenced to death for our beliefs, all of us are wanted men. You see, in our cultures non-violent dissension is not tolerated. All matters are settled by combat and tests of strength; a man of intelligence and ideas is looked upon as a weakling.

"My personal crime was to be born of a minotaur father and an ogre mother, hence my unique coloring. My fellow minotaurs believe that we are a superior race and interaction of any kind with lesser races is looked upon as an abomination.

"My father was sentenced to death for daring to speak out against the emperor. He managed to escape and found refuge with a tribe of ogres who were also outcasts from their people. To an ogre, the most horrendous punishment imaginable is banishment from the tribe. When my father discovered them they were near death, for they had lost their will to live. Through ministrations, both of the body and soul, he returned their self-esteem and together they founded a settlement. Soon, word of mouth spread through the Nethosak underground that this settlement was a refuge for those persecuted for their beliefs and a haven for those who did not fit the mold of society.

"After a time, my father fell in love with a young ogre woman who was working as a nurse at the settlement. I was a product of that love.

"My parents were both slain when I was still a young lad. The emperor, determined to discover the whereabouts of the encampment, allowed one of his prisoners to escape and detailed a squad of soldiers to follow him. The unwary prisoner led the soldiers straight to the camp. The soldiers burned the camp to the ground and slaughtered everyone they could find.

Luckily, I and several others were hunting at the time and had no knowledge of what had transpired. By the time we made our way back to camp, all we found was smoldering ruins and charred bodies.

"After burying our dead and tallying our losses, we set up another camp, the one you see now. We made sure that our new site was more hidden and better protected than the first, and vowed never again to underestimate our enemy.

"But now you come to me with word that Rethoth wants to meet with me on friendly terms. Before I can give you my decision, I must discuss this matter with others of the tribe. I myself do not fear Rethoth, but I must be sure that no harm will come to my people as a result of my actions.

"Please make yourselves comfortable in my home while I am gone. Food and drink will be brought to you; all I ask is that you remain here until I return."

Devroc will leave the building, but the six minotaurs stay behind with the party. Devroc's headquarters is a simple one-room structure consisting of an oblong table and six chairs, a writing desk, a bookcase filled with leather-bound books, cupboards, and a sleeping pallet on the floor. The books are of general interest only, concerned with history, nature, mathematics, and other scholarly subjects. Presently a young ogre maiden enters, bearing a tray piled with smoked ham and an odd-looking but delicious fruit. She sets the platter on the table and brings out a wine bottle and glasses from one of the cupboards. After she has made her preparations, she gestures to the PCs to be seated. The party is free to wander the hut—the six minotaurs only intervene if the PCs try to leave.

After a few hours, a tall figure enters the building dressed in a long brown hooded cape. When he pulls back the hood, you see it is Devroc the minogre.

Devroc informs the party that he is ready to accompany them to Nethosak. In his meeting with the camp elders, a

plan was devised of which he does not inform the PCs at this time. In Rethoth's jail, awaiting execution, are four minotaur and three ogre prisoners, members of the camp, who were captured and tortured by Rethoth's men. Devroc plans to use the intervention of the PCs to try to facilitate release or escape for the prisoners.

When the PCs leave the building, they see their horses waiting outside, fed and watered and ready for travel. Any weapons that the PCs surrendered to the ogres are tied to the saddlebags. Devroc mounts a huge black steed and, with a silent nod of farewell to the community, leads the PCs on a twisting, round-about way out of camp.

Devroc the Minogre: AC 5; MV 12"; FTR 10; hp 79; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10 or by weapon; S 18/07; I 13, W 13, D 15, Cn 14, Ch 12; THAC0 12; AL N

Chapter 4—Back To Nethosak

Before the group gets out of the mountains, they are attacked by any of the draconians that survived the initial assault. The Kapaks again swoop down on the group from a station above the party's trail. This time they concentrate their assaults on Devroc, seeking to kill him and win favor with the minotaur emperor. The Kapaks fight to the death, as they are well aware of the penalty the Dark Queen's forces will impose upon them if they fail this mission.

Kapaks (1-6): AC 4; MV 6"/(15)"/18"; HD 3; hp 23, 22, 19, 19, 17, 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 16; SA Poison; AL LE

The palace of Rethoth

Entering the town of Nethosak, the party is met by a squad of 12 minotaur soldiers and escorted to the palace. Once inside, they are hurried to Rethoth's chambers, where they again see the black minotaur seated on his seat of power, flanked by his 12 personal guards. The soldiers enter the chambers with the



group and stand, guarding the door. Rethoth rises from his chair and after a disgusted look at Devroc, addresses the Party.

"First I must congratulate you on surviving my test and accomplishing your mission. It seems your rivals, the draconians, did not fare as well. Of course you had no way of knowing that you were in competition with them for the same goal. This way made it more interesting.

"Now I must confess," grunts Rethoth, a twisted smile on his bestial face, "that I have not been entirely honest with you. Granted I did wish to make the acquaintance of this freak you have so kindly escorted to my chambers, but only for the purpose of having him killed. Such an abomination to the pure blood of the minotaur race cannot be allowed to exist! And as for you, I'm afraid that I'm going to have to insist that you share his fate. I simply cannot have people wandering about the land telling strangers that they have witnessed the bastard offspring of a minotaur and a filthy ogre bitch. Not at all good for morale.

"As far as your disappearance goes, that has all been taken care of. When you arrived on our shores, a message was sent to your people informing them that your ship was caught in a sudden storm at sea and all hands were lost. As far as they know, you never arrived on Mithas. They were properly grieved and gave you quite a splendid memorial tribute, I understand. Now if you would be so kind as to divest yourselves of your weapons and possessions, my guards will escort you to your new chambers, where you will await your execution on the morrow."

If the party tries to resist or attack Rethoth, the guards step in front of their emperor, forming a wall of extended spears.

As the guards make to escort the party out of the chambers and down the stairs to the dungeon, Devroc shakes off their grip and plants his feet firmly in front of the emperor. In a loud, booming voice he

exclaims, "I demand to face you, my enemy, in the Circus for a trial by combat to judge who is the better man! This is my right as a minotaur!"

A shocked expression spreads over Rethoth's face and then twists into an amused grin.

"Why not?" he mutters to himself, and then more loudly rubbing his hands, "Yes, why not! Let everyone see the superiority of a minotaur of pure blood as he grinds the bones of the half-breed into the dust. Permission granted! We fight in the morning.

"But don't think I've forgotten you," he says, turning to the PCs, "Your execution will be part of the victory celebration."

Now gesturing to the soldiers who flank the doorway, he commands, "Conquith, take your men and spread the word. I want everyone in Nethosak at the arena tomorrow to witness my triumph!"

Minotaur Soldiers (12): AC 4; MV 12"; FTR 5; hp 45 each; #AT2; Dmg 2d4/1d8 with sword; THAC0 16; AL LE

The Dungeon

You descend a seemingly endless series of twisting steps, poked and prodded by the guards at every turn. At the bottom of the stairs, you find yourselves in a 30-foot-by-30-foot stone room. Directly across from the landing, thick steel bars run from floor to ceiling. Behind the barred door is another chamber of approximately the same size. Inside the room, which you see to be a prison cell, are four minotaurs and three ogres. The guard who brought up the rear unceremoniously dumps your possessions in a corner of the outer chamber, while another steps forward to unlock the cell door. Once opened, you are roughly shoved into the dungeon, and the barred door is slammed shut behind you.

Once all the guards but three have left, Devroc greets the other prisoners, clasp- ing them on their backs and calling them by name. Then, turning to the PCs, a sorrowful look in his eyes, he explains.

"I'm sorry to have to involve you in this, but I saw no other way. If you had returned to the palace without me, Rethoth would have had you killed anyway. This way, perhaps there is a chance that some of us may escape with our lives.

"These men are members of my tribe. They were captured by the minotaurs a few days ago and sentenced to death. When word reached our camp of what had befallen them, we agonized over a way to help them, but could think of nothing.

"Then your arrival at our encampment gave me an idea. By pretending to trust Rethoth, I agreed to accompany you so that I could gain access to the palace. I gambled that Rethoth, being the proud and haughty man he is, would respond to my challenge. Luckily, I was right.

"When I face Rethoth in the arena tomorrow, the palace and streets of Nethosak will be deserted. Rethoth has decreed that everyone is to attend. You must overpower what few guards remain and seek freedom for yourselves and my men. A ship, secured by my men, will be waiting at the harbor for your journey home. Petose, one of my best sailors, will see that you arrive safely. And as for myself, I plan to give Rethoth a battle he will never forget."

Once the PCs have agreed to Devroc's plan, he suggests that they eat something from the pot of meager gruel in the corner of the cell, to build up their strength. If the PCs wish to discuss various escape plans with the other prisoners, they should do so in a low whisper. The guards are very suspicious of the newcomers and will raise the alarm if they suspect anyone of plotting a jailbreak. After this, the PCs may settle down on the heaps of flea-infested straw strewn about the cell for an uncomfortable night's sleep.

Jailbreak

Early the next morning, heavy footsteps and loud gruff voices echo down the steps leading to your cells. "They are coming to get me now." Devroc whispers. "Remember our plan and don't try anything foolish. My people must have a chance at freedom." No sooner has he whispered these words when six minotaur guards armed with long, sharp spears burst into the area. "Well, my pretty," grunts one, "Let's see if that yellow fur looks so pretty when it's covered with blood!"

The minotaur who just spoke gestures to one of the others to unlock the cell door and stand back. Leveling their spears at the prisoners, they motion for Devroc to join them. With a last glance at the party and his friends, Devroc, head held high, exits the cell. Four of the minotaurs, with a show of shoving and prodding, escort Devroc up the stairs while two, including the one who opened the cell, stay behind to guard the prisoners.

It is now up to the player characters to devise a means of escape. If there is a kender in the party, the lock could be picked while the guards are distracted. Or the group could try some other ploy such as staging a fight or feigning illness. Whatever they decide to try, remember that the guards are not totally stupid and will not open the cell door unless they are convinced something is wrong.

Once the PCs and the remaining prisoners have gotten out of the cell, they must overpower the guards and make their way up the stairs to freedom. The PCs' weapons and personal belongings are heaped in a pile in the room outside the cell. After overpowering the guards, they can retrieve their possessions.

Minotaur Guards (2): AC 4; MY 12"; FTR 6; hp 47, 43; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/1d6; THAC0 13; AL LE

Minotaur Prisoners (4): AC 4; MV 12"; FTR 4; hp 30, 28, 25, 17; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4 or weapon; THAC0 15; AL N

Ogre Prisoners (3): AC 5; MV 9"; FTR 4; hp 26, 24, 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; THAC0 15; AL N

freedom

As you reach the top of the stairs, you see that Devroc was right: the palace is deserted. Making your way quietly through the corridors, you reach the large double-doors that open up to the outside and freedom.

If the PCs try to do something foolish, like stop to search the palace for treasure, they will be roughly chastised by the other prisoners. Once outside, they see that the streets of Nethosak are deserted as well. Far in the distance, behind the palace, a loud swelling of cheering voices can be heard periodically.

The PCs should encounter no difficulty in making their way to the harbor. They should still proceed with caution, however, as they cannot be certain that everyone is at the games. Once they reach the docks, Petose points to a small sailing vessel moored at the end of the wharf. The other prisoners say their farewells and melt back into the city. Petose accompanies the PCs onto the ship.

As you set sail for your homeland, keeping a watchful eye on the rolling waters behind you for pursuers, you cannot help wondering about Devroc's fate in the arena. Petose says nothing, keeping his strong hands on the wheel and his sharp eyes scanning the waters ahead, but you know he is thinking the same thoughts. Will any of you ever see the legendary golden minotaur again?

epilogue

The PCs should reach home without any problem. Once they have disembarked, Petose will turn the ship back to Mithas and his rendezvous with the other renegades.

Within a few days time, word should reach the PCs concerning the outcome of the battle between Rethoth and Devroc in the Circus. The outcome is entirely up to you, as DM, and the decision should be based on your campaign and whether or not you wish to make further use of the NPC characters.

If Rethoth wins, the chance of any further negotiations between the armies of good and the minotaurs is very slim. In addition, the PCs would find themselves wanted by the minotaurs as escaped criminals, with a price on their heads. If Devroc wins, negotiations between the two sides could be opened up, with the PCs acting as ambassadors between the races to help arrive at a treaty.

Another ending could have Devroc escaping the arena at the last moment, to turn up at some further point in time. This could lead to further adventures between the PCs and the minotaurs.





The Riders of Khur



Before the Cataclysm, in the deserts and grasslands that stretch west from the Courrain Ocean to the Khalkist Mountains, there ranged a group of nomadic tribes known collectively as the Khur.

These rugged horsemen wandered the rolling plains of southern Istar and northern Silvanesti with their families and herds. They were the gypsies of eastern Ansalon, often called to entertain Baliforian festivals with horse acrobatics and music. Most Silvanesti disliked these bands of wandering humans, and many considered them thieves. Skilled desert warriors, the Khur were well-known for their husbandry, their stallions prized by man and elf alike. Yet the Khur followed customs that kept them always quarreling amongst themselves, so most traveled in family bands, setting distinctive wagon and tent camps in the wilderness, never more than 50 people in one tribe.

Then Krynn felt the wrath of the gods and the mountains of fire fell to re-shape Ansalon. Istar disappeared, but the Khur survived the disasters in large numbers, hiding in northern Silvanesti. Hot, dry northern winds turned the plains into trackless deserts. For the first time in their history, these nomads were united by a common cause. Led by a charismatic warrior named Keja, the Khur battled the Baliforian refugees who had fled the terrible destruction brought on by the angry gods. Keja gathered thousands of horsemen into a conquering army, the nomads rallying to his side. He was a tactical genius and commanded his troops to victory after victory until he carved out a new country that his forces could easily control. Wise in the ways of his people, he named the new land Khur and gave them a new goal, a homeland.

Declaring himself "Kahn," Keja wisely held his new territory and applied his armies to civic projects to improve the land when they weren't battling in defense of it. Soon he convinced his people that they needed a capital, and the great fortress-city of Khuri-kahn ("Praise to Kahn") was built with enthusiasm.

At the age of 52, Keja realized that his kingdom was doomed to fall apart after his death—the quibbling and infighting among the former nomads had begun

soon after Balifor's largest invasion was repelled, some ten years after the Cataclysm. Even his seven sons were set against each other in a struggle to be chosen heir. Keja decided to use his people's weakness to strengthen the new homeland, rather than defeat it.

He separated his great army into seven tribes, placing a son to govern each and sending six of the tribes back out to wander the desert wastelands of Khur. The remaining son, the eldest, was named heir; his tribe was allowed to stay in Khuri-kahn. Only the Kahn can call the tribes together again, in times of hardship or war. The sons were allowed to petition their father once per year, and so a yearly ritual was started. Keja died at the ripe old age of 61, a venerated monarch.

Keja's son established Khuri-kahn as an important trading city on the Khurman Sea and the Bay of Balifor. He commissioned the first Khur Festival at Pikaraso Springs, just 40 miles east of the capital overlooking the sea. Here a hot spring bubbled in the yawning mouth of an enormous cavern, a natural amphitheater. The nomad tribes enjoyed the festival, so another Khur tradition was born.

Garmac, as Keja's eldest son was called, ignored his brothers' petitions and only gathered the army once, to raid into Silvanesti territory. This expedition ended in a disastrous defeat, yet the Silvanesti did not invade the arid wastes of Khur, merely threatened retaliation for any future military actions. This Kahn shunned his brothers and they despised him for his failure in battle. Some stopped appearing in the court when it was time for the yearly petition ceremony. The nomads began to return to their horses and caravans. Garmac's son succeeded him in time, and the seven tribes further isolated themselves from each other. The Kahns ruled the land of Khur for 300 years, prospering in Khuri-kahn, while their blood-relatives ruled the gypsies of the sand and barren salt flats left by the Cataclysm. The history of Khur is full of deceit, murders, secret plots, and greedy monarchs; the DM can fill in the details if necessary to his campaign.

During that 300-year rule, Garmac's

Festival at Pikaraso became the most important yearly event in Khur, a gathering of all the tribes for celebration, competition, and trading. Many famous merchants face harsh trials to travel to the festival to buy Krynn's finest stallions or jade.

This adventure takes place during the period 338-342 AC, in the early years of the Age of Dragons, before the War of the Lance. The adventure also provides information to round out the entire land of Khur for gaming in this time period. The DM is encouraged to expand the story and the adventure. The adventure is intended for 4 to 7 PCs, levels 5-7; the players must be either drawn into the adventure by accident or by the same desires as drive the merchants who flock to the great festival of Khur—to find a perfect mount or make a fortune trading goods. Examples of accidents are as violent as shipwrecks on the Khurman sea, or as mundane as travels through Khur on the way to another land, but the adventure starts with a boy crying in the road.

The Boy Thief

As the PCs travel the road to Pikaraso Springs, they come upon a boy, a Khur barbarian, crying in the road (AC 9, MV 12", TH1, hp 4, Dmg 1d4 (dagger), S9, I14, D18, C16). The child throws himself before the travelers' horses and begs for aid. This is what he says:

"Please, good sirs, help me, please! A group of bandits has stolen my sister but they haven't gotten very far. We could catch them and free her. They'll make her a slave, oh, we've got to save her! There are not many of them and you are more powerful, I can tell. Please help me."

The boy claims his name is Gerg. He explains that his sister is being carried off by four men on horseback. Tears smudge his dirty face and he looks haggard, as if pressed by a recent ordeal. His tattered clothes instill pity, and most characters will want to help him, especially if there are any Knights of Solamnia traveling among the PCs. He begs the PCs for aid, holding on to their mounts and pleading,



saying that if they refuse to help, he will follow the bandits and try to rescue the girl on his own. If the PCs decide to help him, Gerg climbs up on the leading adventurer's mount and directs the PCs in hurried pursuit. In only a few minutes, the bandits escorting the girl come into sight, about 50 feet ahead in a low valley of rocks and thick mounds of dead seagrass.

There is only a 10% chance that a PC discovers that the boy is lying, unless a magical spell is used (this will scare the boy and he will use the word of recall taught by his master to carry him home!).

"Do not draw your weapons until we are close with these bandits," the boy cautions, "So as not to alert them to our intentions too soon. That's her in the middle, please take me to her, now, quickly, before they suspect." The boy urges the PCs to charge into the group of startled men surrounding a green-robed young woman with flaxen hair. The "bandits" make no hostile actions, and eye the charge with surprise and curiosity. The riders of Khur are dressed in black tunics and vests embroidered with scarlet and gold swirling patterns. These warriors rest their hands on their scimitars, but will not draw them until threatened. As soon as the boy is close to the girl, he leaps from the horse, surprising everyone, snatches a heavy brass necklace from around the woman's neck, and, uttering an incantation, disappears!

Now, the startled warriors react with a roar of anger! They are four elite guardians of the Weya-lu tribe (AC 5 [leather], MV [foot/horse] 12"/18", Bar 5, Dmg by weapon type, AL NG). The unknowing PCs have just aided in a horrendous crime: an important relic has been stolen from the daughter of a chief of a Khur nomad clan! These warriors can ride standing on their horses' backs and fight with +2 to hit and +2 AC. There is a 20% chance that a blow of 4 or less points damage knocks them off their mounts. For every point of damage over 4 in a single blow, add 10% to the chance of falling. The horses are trained to support the acrobatics, and they take commands from the placement of their riders' feet on their backs, from turning tight circles and

changing direction to galloping off at the highest speed. The woman dressed in green shouts to stop, but her men only put down their scimitars if the PCs back off and also lower their guards.

The woman is beautiful and commanding, and she calls for the adventurers' leader to step forth. She demands an accounting of what has happened; she also demands the return of the Signet of the Weya-lu immediately. She does not introduce herself. The Khur riders do not believe the PCs' story, and they grumble amongst themselves. The woman looks skeptical, but requests the PCs follow them to Pikaraso Springs.

"If you are, as you say, innocent of this crime, then come with us and help us locate this boy. He was of Khur and perhaps we can find him at the Springs. I cannot decide for the council of the Weya-lu. I ask you to follow us into the festival grounds and report to my elders. They can decide what is to be done."

If the PCs do not accompany these warriors back to report, they become marked men by the Weya-lu tribe, who will begin multiple attempts on their lives, such as knifings in a crowd or poison. This is left to the discretion of the DM.

The ride is only for an hour—the woman does not reveal anything else and the angry guards escort the players to the great tent-and-wagon city that has sprung up for the festival. It is the first day of the four-day celebration, but the men look grim. No one speaks until they reach the springs, where they direct the PCs immediately to their camp.

The Pikaraso Springs

The great cavern and springs were created by the Cataclysm, and thus are very recent formations measured against the ages of Krynn. The Pikaraso Springs are natural, fresh water springs that bubble up in the mouth of the huge jagged cave. Years ago one of the Kahns had a great waystation and public baths built around the warm mineral waters. Many Khur believe that these waters and baths are therapeutic; many guests come to the waystation for treatments in the hot springs and the sea air. The huge dome

has no stalagmites or stalactites, and the nomads have cleared out the huge chamber and carried in beach sand for the floor. The huge cave behind the bathhouse provides an excellent arena for the annual festival, rodeo, horse auction, and the gathering of the tribes. For years the population has exceeded the bounds of the cavern and the riders of Khur have created a huge tent city that surrounds the springs with colorful canvas, silks, flags, and painted wagons. Various families within the tribes mark their territory with tall and elaborately carved totems that depict the gods of neutrality and the animal spirits the Khur worship.

The PCs have now entered a maze of tents, filled with people, many celebrating or vending their wares, and lots of petty thievery (35% chance per turn of an attempt by a 1st- to 3d-level barbarian thief, AC 8, chance to pick pockets 40% minus PC level modifiers). There are street musicians, open-pit barbecues, and wandering jugglers. The following list outlines the tribesmen and prominent visitors for the DM's use in expanding the storyline or rounding out the description of the festival.

*1. The Weya-lu, named after the second son of Keja, ruled by Warss the Swift and a council of elders. This tribe favors the colors scarlet and black and their totem is a hawk. They are the most honorable of the tribes; some of the other tribes dislike them and oppose their petitions to the Kahn.

Typical Weya-lu warrior: AC 5, Bar3, hp 24, MV 12"/18", AL NG, Dmg by scimitar, S 17, I 15, D 17, Cn 16

Warss: AC 2, MV 12", Bar8, hp 58, Dmg 1d8+2 (*long sword* +2, S 18/47, I 16, W 14, D 14, Cn 12, Ch 15, AL NG

* 2. The Mayakhur, named for the third son, are ruled by Makree, who dresses his men in yellow and brown tunics. These people are known for poor dealings and are avoided in trades. They fight unfairly, ganging up on strangers to exhort steel pieces. The totem of the Mayakhur is a tiger, and the typical warrior travels with a number of his brothers.

Typical Mayakhur Warrior: AC 6, Bar3, hp 22, Mv 12"/18", Dmg 1d6 (short sword), S 15, I 14, Cn 16, AL NE



Makree: AC 1, MV 12", Bar7, hp 52, Dmg by club +1, S 18 68%, I 14, W 10, D 18, Cn 17, Ch 12, AL NE

* 3. The Hachakee, named for Keja's fourth son, are led by Torando, and are the fiercest nomad warriors, proudly displaying battle scars and enemies' tokens of defeat. The Hachakee totem is the desert fox and they dress in blue tunics with orange embroidery and white fur caps. They are renowned for their horsemanship and swordsmanship. Torando is involved in the plot described below under the waystation. Hachakee will fight to the death.

Typical Hachakee warrior: AC 5, Bar4, hp 30, MV 12"/18", Dmg 1d8 (scimitar), S 18, I 14, D 17, Cn 15, AL NE

Torando: AC 2, MV 12", Bar9, hp 73, Dmg 1d8+2 (scimitar +2), S 18/35, I 16, W 11, D 16, Cn 17, Ch 14, AL NE

* 4. The Mikku, led by Big Wolf, are named for the fifth son and carry the bear totem into war. These barbarians wield heavy war-clubs and dress in black and white. They are often crass, brawling in the tent city, disturbing their neighbors, and stealing all they can find. They are best known for their music and dancing. Their women are very beautiful and will attempt to charm an unsuspecting PC into a wagon to be robbed (25% chance of PC willingly participating). Mikku warriors always smile, even in battle.

Typical Mikku warrior: AC 6, Bar3, hp 24, MV 12"/18", Dmg 1d6 (club), S 16, I 15, Cn 16, D 17, AL NE

Big Wolf: AC 1, MV 10", Bar8, hp 60, Dmg 1d6+2 (club +2), S 18/58, I 12, W 13, D 18, Cn 17, Ch 16, AL NE

* 5. The Tondoon are led by Jingo the Sly, and favor the colors of green and purple. Their sign is the bull and they are named after the sixth son of Keja. As part of their rites of manhood, the Tondoon scar their faces with a vertical cut that runs from the left eye across the cheek to the jaw line. They are excellent traders and carry many wares; they always seem ready to make a deal. They don't talk much, unless it is about business, and they tend to be solitary, or stay in small groups.

Typical Tondoon warrior: AC 6, Bar4, hp 30, MV 12"/18" Dmg 1d8 (long sword), S 16, I 16, Cn 17, D 14, AL NE

Jingo the Sly: AC 3, MV 12", Bar8, hp 59, Dmg 1d8+1 (sword +1), S 18, I 18, W 16, D 15, Cn 14, Ch 12, AL NE

* 6. The Fin-maskar are known for their hunting skills and they are led by Doro Huntmaster. They are the tribe of the seventh son. These nomads dress in blue and black tunics fletched in white and silver. These people make intricate carvings in wood and bone. The totem of the Fin-maskar is the stag, and most warriors carry daggers with staghorn handles.

Typical Fin-maskar warrior: AC 4, Bar4, hp 30, MV 12"/18", Dmg by spear or bow, S 15, I 15, W 16, Cn 17, D 17, AL NG

Doro Huntmaster: AC 3, MV 12", Bar7, Dmg 1d8+2 (scimitar +2), S 18/75, I 14, W 17, D 16, Cn 15, Ch 12, AL NG

* 7. The Kahn leads the last tribe of the Khurish nomads, although these people have become the dwellers of Khuri-kahn and over generations have forgotten the life in the wilds. They are corrupt law officials and representatives of the capitol, negotiating with a new and powerful adversary from the west (the draconians). The men dress in any color and their embroidery uses all the colors. They are weak-willed and accustomed to the pleasures of their decadent city. They carry the totem of a dragon. They are referred to as the Khur, but the other tribes call them the spawn of Garmac. They are despised by the other tribes, who profess that the only true men are nomads, free under the stars of Krynn's night. These warriors carry deadly poisoned daggers.

Typical Khur warrior: AC 6, Bar3, hp 22, MV 12"/18" Dmg by weapon + poison, S 15, I 14, Cn 13, D 13, AL LE

The Kahn's son arrives at the festival on the second day of celebrations. He is a boy seen riding in a very elaborate wagon, fluted with carvings and brass rails. His patrol of guards surrounds him and is careful not to let strangers too close (15 Guards: AC 4, MV 12", Bar5, Dmg 1d8 [long sword], S 16, D 15, AL LG)

Matarc, the young prince: AC 9, Bar1, hp 6, Dmg 1d4 (dagger), S 12, I 16, W 11, Cn 14, Ch 16, AL NG

* 8. The Ruindo Carvers are woodcarvers and timbermen who have brought

their wares to the festival from the northern forests of Silvanesti. These men make totem poles and are honest and hard-working. They will provide a safe refuge for hunted PCs if paid enough. Dressed in brown robes, they avoid contact with the tribes except for selling their goods. They have no declared leader and fight only if it fits into the campaign; most stats are to be determined by the DM, except that these men are of neutral good alignment.

* 9. The Sooth-sayers are found throughout the huge camp, in wagons and dark tents. Most (60%) of these fortune-tellers are fakes trying to bilk passers-by. The others are skilled women, apt at the use of the Tarot cards and granted slight abilities by the gods of neutrality. Any PC paying for this service will receive a typical palm-reading session with a cryptic discussion of the future, complete with crystal balls and magic-eyes painted on the fortune-teller's palm. In 10% of the cases, the PC will learn a valuable clue to finding the boy and returning the stolen relic.

* 10. The horse traders line the avenues with stalls. They constantly barter and parade their animals, even late in the evening. They have hired loud-voiced auctioneers to call at all prospective buyers, offering them special incentives of food and liquor. The pavilions are gaudy, with strung beads and wind-chimes hanging from support posts and rich silks and tapestries draped over the floor pillows. These men are members of all tribes, and always try to get the best end of the deal. It will take a shrewd PC to choose a fine animal and bargain to get a fair price. The DM can expand upon various traders as necessary for his campaign, though they all tend to be crooks (AL NE).

* 11. A number of tinkers selling gnomish devices, such as fargabs and an occasional blamblower, are attending the festival. They travel in groups of 1d3 and try to stay out of the way. Most are merchants looking to sell their devices to anyone who shows interest. They are truly afraid of their benefactors and the situation, but they bravely vend their creations. Gnomes have every right to be nervous, for the nomads take sport in baiting them, especially the riders



of Mayakhur. A PC can pick a good fight by interfering with the nomads' jests, but a grateful tinker might steer the players in the right direction (perhaps one saw the boy carrying the brass necklace in the waystation, or heard that there was a pair of phony kender staying at the Baths). For more information on this race and its characteristics, see the *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* hardback.

* 12. Traveling in disguise as a group of merchants from Estwilde, a group of Knights of Solamnia has come to the festival to buy stallions for war-training. They will aid any other Knight, such as a PC, if they are called into action for a righteous cause. Their leader is a Knight of Mind (6th-lvl Rose) named Pharnex of the Steel-Claw (he lost his left hand in his quest to join his Order). He can use his steel claw as a weapon or a shield and he commands the following men, all incognito:

#of Men	Description	Order
12	Squires, Crown	1st lvl, AC 6
5	Defenders, Crown	2d lvl, AC 6
4	Knights, Crown	3d lvl, AC 5
3	Novices, Sword	4th lvl, AC 5
2	Knight, Sword	4th lvl, AC 3
2	Novices, Rose	4th lvl, AC 3
1	Knight of Tears, Rose	5th lvl, AC 2

All these Knights of Solamnia are Lawful Good in alignment and would be honored to protect the prince of Khur. They prefer swords and shields in battle. Additional specs for these Knights are left to the DM's discretion. Their armor and weapons are hidden in a wagon in their camp.

Pharnex, Knight of Mind (Order of Rose): AC 3, MV 12", Pa16, Dmg 1d8+2 (*long sword* +2) or 1d4 (*hook*), S 18/25, I 16, W 15, D 16, Cn 17, Ch 12, AL LG

* 13. Two Sivaks are masquerading as kender, under the false names of Wissle and Max Furrtoe.

Sivaks: AC 1, HD 6, hp 40, 34, MV 6"/(15")/18", Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d6, +2 on saves, AL NE, *polymorph* (see *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* for com-

plete details)

In a battle or during the kidnaping, these monsters revert to their natural form. The PCs may run into them in the tent city (10% chance), but it is more likely to meet them in the Pikaraso Waystation pretending to be kender. These two draconians are slavers involved in Torando's plot (outlined on page 51). They are accompanied by a minotaur named Wixlach who captains their ship, anchored off the shore of Khur.

Wixlach never ventures out until after dark and even then wears a heavy cloak disguise. He can be found in room E or O in the waystation, except for the night of the kidnaping. That night he collects his cargo and sets sail for Baliforian waters. Wixlach's crew is made of 2d- to 3d-level minotaur seamen.

Minotaur seamen (17): AC 3, HD 2-3, MV 9", Dmg by sword or club, AL NE, see *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* for more information). These minotaurs never leave their boat; they only come into the adventure if the PCs attempt to free the slaves in the ship's hold.

Wixlach the minotaur: AC 2, MV 12", F7, hp 55, Dmg 1d8+2 (*long sword* +2), S 18/89, I 15, W 11, D 14, Cn 18, Ch 12, AL NE

* 14. There are many groups of Qualinesti and Kagonesti traders at the festival to buy horses. These merchants are not fighters, but they are lawful good and will hide PCs who are running from the tribesmen of Khur. These elves try to remain aloof, not willing to tell their names or even answer ruffians. Their names and stats are left to the DM's discretion. If the PCs meet them, use the *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* book to round out their characters and customs. These merchants despise the uncouth nomads, and 60% of the time they ignore PCs as well, even if the players are begging!

* 15. The climax of the four-day festival is a Khur-style rodeo in the great auditorium-cave. The tribesmen compete for prizes in events that display courage and skill in horsemanship. Events include races, ropings, steeplechases, best-of-breed shows, and any other events the DM wishes to add. The day-

long rodeo includes clowns, bullfights, and cockfights. The nomads consume an enormous amount of beer and liquor, singing and telling stories late into the night. There is a lot of gambling and PCs can enter any event they wish (basic requirement is proficiency in horsemanship). The field of competitors is never larger than 1d8 in each of three elimination rounds in an event. There is an entrance fee of two steel pieces, and the prizes are 30 stl for first, 20 for second, and 10 for third place. The DM can determine the winners of each elimination round by numbering each competitor and rolling 1d8 three times to determine the top three contestants who then move on to the next round. In the first round, Khurish contestants will accept bribes of two or more steel pieces to lose, so a PC can buy a first-round victory if he desires.

The Weya-Lu Tribe

The PCs are led by their escorts to the Weya-lu camp. There they are taken into a large, smoky tent filled with Khurish barbarians all dressed in black and scarlet. A council of eight elders and the leader of the Weya-lu, a large, bald barbarian named Warss the Swift, sit stone-silent while the woman traveler retells the story of the theft of the brass necklace. The announcement causes sounds of alarm among the crowd in the big tent. At the end of her account, Warss stands and charges the players with the following words:

"As leader of the family Weya-lu, I speak for all. You outlanders must prove your innocence by finding the thief of the symbol of our brotherhood and returning our relic to us. It may be that you are merely pawns of another tribe that seeks our downfall and wishes to embarrass us to the Kahn, but we cannot allow this deed to go unpunished. We will defer our wrath for five days to provide you time to accomplish this feat. If you return the necklace to this council, then we shall make you honorary brothers and offer you the trial to become true warriors of Weya-lu. If you do not return the necklace,



then you will be marked as thieves of our sacred treasure and we will hunt you like wild dogs to the end of your days. Thus I, Warss, have spoken!"

The PCs are allowed to leave and begin their search. The woman traveler is Warss's daughter, Neala, and there is a 45% chance that one of the PCs will fall in love with her because of her beauty. She is interested, but she can only speak to members of the tribe. Thus, though her feelings for the PC are strong, she cannot speak with him until he has passed the trial of the Weya-lu and become a full member of the tribe. Then she will describe all the tribes to him (see information above), give him all the help she can, and allow the PC to court her. (A marriage ceremony can be devised by the DM if it fits into the campaign.)

Neala: AC 8 (leather), MV 12", bar2, Dmg 1d8 (sword), S 17, I 15, W 16, D 15, Cn 14, Ch 17, AL NG

The stolen necklace is a symbol of the tribe recognized by the Kahn. Tradition dictates it be worn during the yearly ceremony to petition the Kahn; those chieftains who do not appear with their symbols are disgraced in the eyes of all the other tribes. It is very important to the Weya-lu that this relic be recovered. It is also important since the Weya-lu occupy the position of First Council to the Kahn, the tribe the Kahn depends on for information and advice. It is a favored position. The Weya-lu, with their council of elders, have held this rank for two generations.

The Trial of The Weya-Lu

If a PC desires to join the tribe, he must appear before the council and announce his decision. The trial is in two parts. The first part is the taming of a wild stallion that then becomes the horse of the new warrior. Armed with only a rope, the PC is placed in a corral with a wild stallion (AC 6, HD 3, MV 24", Dmg 1d3/1d4/1d4 [bite/kick/kick]) that he must first lasso (40% chance/attempt + 10%/turn practiced) then ride into submission. The horse has a 60% chance to

throw the PC (dmg 1d4) for the first two rounds on its back, decreasing 10% each round thereafter. If the rider is thrown, he must begin all over again. When the animal reaches a 20% chance to throw rider, it will sense this and roll, doing 1d8 damage, but if the rider holds on, the animal is broken. Once the chance to throw the rider is down to zero, the horse is broken and the rider must begin training the beast, which will take 2-4 weeks of working every day with the animal.

The second part of the Weya-lu trial is a ceremony conducted under the light of Lunitari at High Sanction. It is a sacred ritual, solemnly consecrated to the gods of neutrality. The PC(s) is dressed in ceremonial black and scarlet and has all hair shorn. Then two elders give the applicant a potion that "kills the feeling of pain." The whole tribe gathers and a wild hawk is brought forth blindfolded and tethered to a pole. The elders tear the front of the gown and unmask and unleash the hawk on the applicant's chest, so that the bird claws the PC in a vicious manner (dmg 1d4). Then the hawk is set free to fly off into the moonlit sky. Warss steps forward with a silver cup and collects blood from the wounds, which he throws on a brazier filled with hot coals. As the steam rises from the burning blood, the warriors, begin a chant, and one by one they step forward and touch the applicant on the forehead with their swords.

When this is finished, Warss gives the PC(s) a Weya-lu scimitar as his own. A great celebration for the new brother(s) begins and the tribe passes ceremonial plates and flagons. Various members sing long ballads of their people from a time before the Cataclysm. The symbol of the Weya-lu is scratched in the earth and the initiate(s) is seated upon it. Instruments are brought out and the music is fast. The PC(s) feels light-headed as the ceremony turns into a party for the tribe, with drinking, dancing, and lots of food, lasting until dawn. The potion the PC(s) drank makes him have strange sensations, and he feels a surge of energy from the Khur flowing through him and channeling up into the sky.

As the sun rises, the tribe begins to chant together. Sirrion, the neutral god,

appears in the image of a giant flaming hawk, proclaiming the newest member of the tribe and giving the PC a special name that is his tribal name, known only to his brothers (DM's discretion, for example: "This is a Weya-lu warrior. He shall be called Wolf."). Then the image of the god fades, the ceremony ends and the PCs sleep for 2d4 hours.

The pikaraso springs Waystation

The waystation is a combination hotel and public baths run by a steward appointed by the Kahn. The large marble building is always booked weeks in advance by pilgrims who believe in the therapeutic value of the hot mineral pools. Throngs of nomads congest the area, gathering fresh water in brass and terra-cotta urns and lining up for their turn in the healing spring waters. The current steward is a wizard of the Fifth Order named Rohzgan (AC 3, MV 12", MU8, hp 45, Dmg by spells, S 13, I 17, W 15, D 15, Cn 12, Ch 14, AL NE) who is aligned with the god/moon Nunitari and knows these spells: *slay living, cause light wounds, cause serious wounds, maze, flame arrow, fireball, fire shield, hold person, blink, detect invisible, detect illusion, animate dead, audible glamor, improved invisibility, Nystul's magic aura, push, mount, and identify.*

Rohzgan has a familiar, an otter (AC 7, HD 1, MV 9"/18", Dmg 1d2) that is used to spy on guests and can quickly travel between all the bath-rooms via the aqueducts and drainage pipes. Rohzgan's apprentice is a young thief named Quartti, whom the PCs recognize as the lad who tricked them into helping steal the Weya-lu's symbol! During the day, the boy will be found with his master in the anteroom (Room A on the map). If confronted by the PCs, he will deny ever having seen the players, stating he couldn't have stolen anything because he was at the waystation during the time of the theft. His master will collaborate his story.

If the PCs press the issue, Rohzgan's hired guards evict them (12 guards: AC 3, Bar4, MV 9", AL NE; Dmg 1d8



[sword], I 14, D 16). The PCs will have to do some secret investigations to find the necklace's hiding place.

Rohzgan is in league with Torando of the Hachakee and Jingo the Sly of the Tondoon. They plan to use the stolen necklace to implicate the Weya-lu tribe in an atrocity involving the kidnaping of the Kahn's son, Matarc, who is attending the festival. The plot is to sell the prince of the realm and his guards to the Sivak slavers who are masquerading as the two kender, Wissle and Max Furrtoe. One guard will be allowed to escape with the Weya-lu symbol, thereby bringing the wrath of the Kahn to bear on the only honorable tribe of all the Khur.

The Weya-lu will be chased from the land and the Hachakee and Tondoon will become the Kahn's strongest allies, supplanting the Weya-lu as First Council. Torando is a power-hungry tyrant who intends to usurp the Kahn's throne as soon as his most powerful opposition, Warss and his tribe, are cleared away.

The PCs can foil this plan by stealing

back the necklace, or by getting proof of the plan to the Weya-lu, who will warn the prince and protect him. The kidnaping is planned for the final night of the festival when most people are lost in drunken celebration. If the players miss their opportunity, they can assault the minotaur vessel and attempt to bring the prince back to freedom, but only if they have uncovered the plot by a thorough investigation of the Pikaraso Springs Waystation. Let the players decide when to approach the waystation, even if they want to wait until the very night of the abduction, to use the festival as cover!

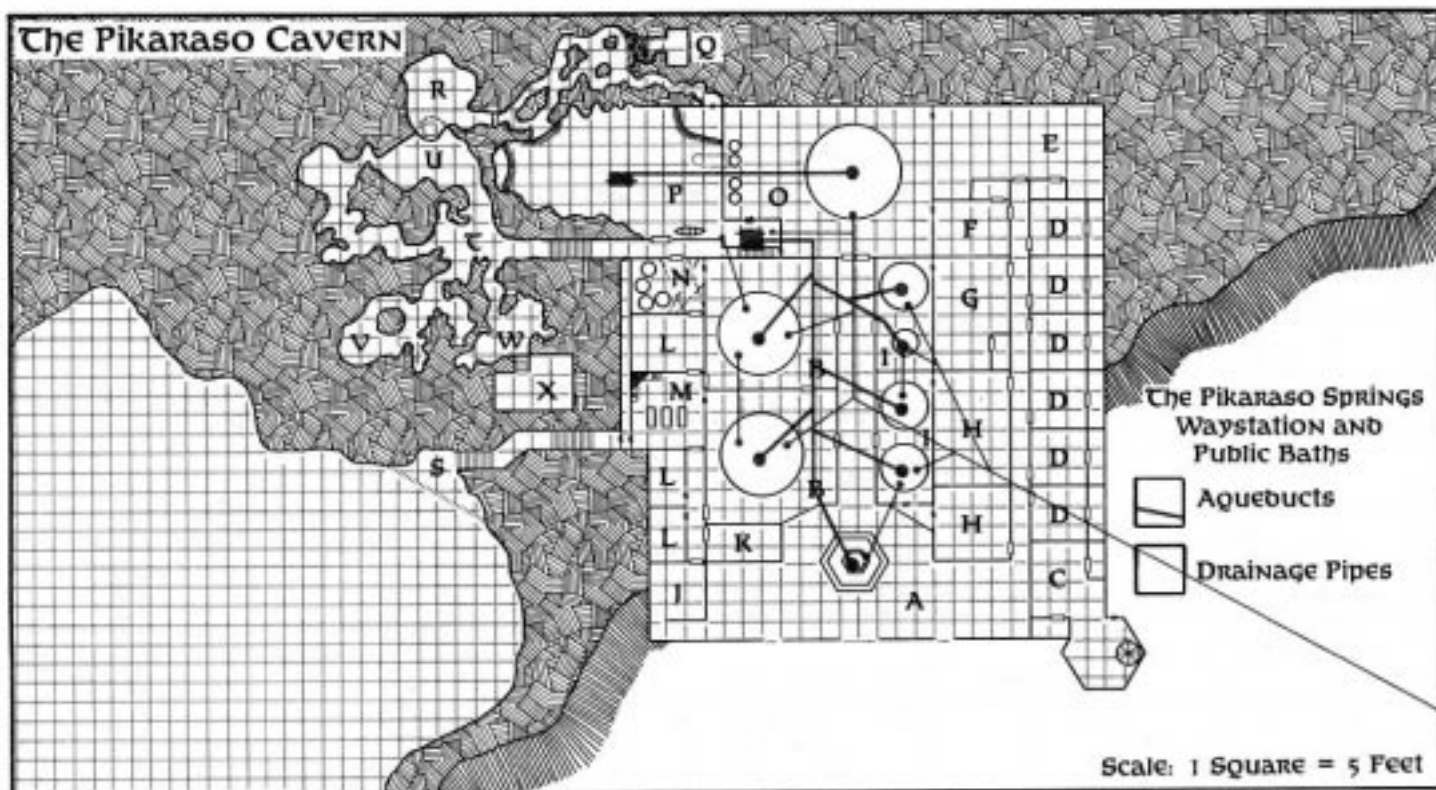
The key to the map of the waystation is outlined in the following text. The letters in the text refer to the letters on the map. The PCs can sneak into the building through the drainage pipes that lead into Room P, the Springs (there is a 10% chance of encountering the otter in the pipes. If that happens, Rohzgan will meet the players as they emerge from the pipes!).

a. The Breezeway

This is a long, T-shaped lobby centered around a fountain that attracts the dusty, thirsty nomads. Six of Rohzgan's guards are stationed in this room at all times to keep the crowd under control. There are usually lines of people waiting for their chance in the public baths (rooms B), one for men and one for women. During the days Rohzgan can be found pacing the floors here, collecting steel pieces for each dip in the pool and arranging for the rental of sleeping quarters (rooms C-H). The otter never ventures into this crowded room, while the boy, Quarti, follows his master about like a cur. Even though there is no tavern, if one pays enough, one can get food or drink with one's room.

B. The Public Baths

The baths are segregated by sex, but they are otherwise identical—crowded with nomads soaking in the hot water. If a PC stays in the water for an hour, there is a 35% chance that a servant will enter through one of the secret doors (there are





15 servants total). These rooms are open to the public day and night. There is nothing of interest here, although there is a 25% chance of thievery while the PCs are in the water.

c. Sleeping quarters

A rental room, this is currently used by Torando and five Hachakee warriors. There is a 55% chance they are in the room. It has a secret exit and stairs up to a tower, a simple battlement looking down to the sea. In one of the closets is a locked box that holds Torando's notes and a number of steel pieces. The notes are comparing two forces, "Matarc's" to "Weya-lu." There are 35 in the Weya-lu force and only 16 in Matarc's. There is a second note that discusses the prince's daily routine and his personal guards, highlighting the times when the guard is weakest. If this room is being searched before the kidnapping, there are 4,500 sp in this wooden box. After the Sivaks have been paid, on the 4th day, there are only 475 sp here.

Torando's plan is to dress 32 of his most loyal men in black and scarlet, the colors of the Weya-lu. Then, with the help of the Sivaks and the minotaur, they are to quickly overwhelm the prince's guard. Next they disguise the captives and transport them to the minotaur's long-boats down on the shore. Finally, they plant the Weya-lu necklace on an unconscious guard and start rumors to discredit the rival tribe.

d. Sleeping Rooms

These are identical rooms, all renting for as much as Rohzgan can get, as he will evict one guest if another will pay more! Pallets are carried in for the number of sleepers in a party.

e. Sleeping Room

This room is rented by the two draconians masquerading as kender. Also here is their captain, the minotaur Wixlach. The room is sumptuously furnished in silks and carved wood; it also has a secret door into Room O. All valuables are kept on the minotaur's ship, anchored far out in the bay. They leave this room only to eat, and they are irritated by the cramped

quarters. If these creatures see that Torando's schemes are uncovered, they attempt to round up a force and carry on with the kidnap, this time for ransom. They hire 12 average Hachakee, six Tondoon, and 30 Mayakhur, and then attempt the abduction immediately!

f. Sleeping Room

This is the room rented by Jingo the Sly and his three Tondoon guards. It has a secret entrance to Room O. Jingo keeps 100 sp stored in locked leather saddlebag under his sleeping pallet.

g. Sleeping Room

This room has a secret door leading to a private bath, Room I.

h. Sleeping Rooms

These two rooms can be rented if a clandestine meeting needs to be arranged, as they both have a secret door to the same private bath.

i. Private Pools

These are smaller, private bathing pools that Rohzgan rents for 20 sp or more, servants extra.

J. anteroom

This is an anteroom where servants can rest. They do not allow PCs to pass without sounding an alarm.

k. Servants quarters

There is nothing of interest here. There are always 1d4 servants sleeping here who will sound an alarm if disturbed.

L. Storage Rooms

These rooms hold food, extra pallets, towels, bluing for the laundry, beer, liquors, bottles to sell spring water, and other sundries.

M. Kitchen

This is a wide kitchen with three tables. A hearth in the far corner fills most of the room. There are 1d4 servants here at all

hours, preparing meals. They sound an alarm if they see intruders. There is a secret door into the men's public bath; in the southwest corner, a secret door opens on a corridor leading to Rooms P and S.

N. Laundry Room

This is a laundry room. There are always 1d4 servants here dipping the towels in the four vats of bluing and hanging the clean linen to dry on lines strung across the room. Sight of the PCs will send them running for Room L to sound the alarm. The door to Room P and the dungeon chambers T-X is locked with a heavy brass mechanism and it is hot to the touch. There is a secret door in this room opening on the women's public bath.

O. Bathing Room

This is the most expensive and exclusive bathing room, called the "Kahn's Rest." It features a grand fountain with only the freshest water, pumped by a system separate from that traversed by the commoners' water. There are four great brass urns set against the west wall and the second from the north has a secret, water-filled tunnel through its bottom into Room P, a frequent path for the otter. There is also a second secret door into a different section of Room P in the southwest. The Sivaks and the minotaur share this bath late at night when there are no high-paying customers.

P. The Springs

This area is a natural cave, filled to a depth of three to 12 feet with hot mineral water, uncomfortable to touch. There is a canoe for easy traveling to the secret passages in the northern part of the room or to repair the machinery—great spring-powered water wheels that keep the aqueducts filled. The room is thick with steam and visibility is only 15 feet in any direction, so a PC by the canoe moorings cannot see the passages in the north. There is nothing of value in this room.

q. hidden Room

There is a cave-in in the rough natural



passageways in the north part of Room P. If it is investigated, the PCs find a hidden room. Many years ago, an evil steward of the springs caused the ceiling to collapse when he found what was in this secret room. It holds two magical weapons of good alignment. One is a sword forged by the *Hammer of Kharas*. It is +2 to hit, AL LG, ego 15. The other item is a shield +1, covered with symbols of the Holy Order of Stars. These were secreted into this cave just after the Cataclysm by a believer who wanted them to stay out of the hands of the evil that had come to rule the world. It will take two hours of digging to free these valuable weapons.

R. Cache

This room is locked and is protected by ten skeletons animated by Rohzgan (AC 6, HD 1, MV 6", Dmg 1d6). On the wall, hanging over a trap-door, is the Weya-lu's necklace. If the trap is triggered, the necklace as well as any one in the 5'-by-5' square in front of it fall down into Room U below (dmg 1d6). There is nothing else of value in this room.

T. Landing

This is a darkened landing with the only light emanating faintly from Room V. There are five corridors leading off into the dark. It is very quiet here.

u. Pudding Room

This room is full of a black pudding. It lies 3-5 inches deep on the floor (AC 6, MV 6") HD 10, hp 140, Dmg 3d8 + corrosion). It is kept in this section of the tunnel by a chemical treatment painted in the passageway (a minotaur taught the method to Rohzgan and he's kept a pudding pet ever since!). The chambers to the west are empty.

V. glow, little glow Worm

Behind a pillar in the chamber ahead, a dim light flickers. It is a dead body alive with glow-grubs. The room is trapped with poisoned darts that are tripped by stones in the rough floor (only the character(s) in the lead are affected, darts attack as 5-HD crea-

tures). The poison causes immediate fevers and convulsions (no save) that last for two hours, then the PC(s) can save vs. death. There is nothing of value here.

w. guardian daemons

Rohzgan has placed two eggs that hold guardian daemons before the door to his private chambers in the southeastern wall of this cavern. These monsters can sense the presence of any sentient creatures other than Rohzgan within five feet of the door. They then burst their fragile shells, swelling to the size of bears, forbidding passage to all who trespass (AC 1, MV 9", HD 8, Dmg 1d6/1d12/1d12, immune to charm, hold, sleep, polymorph, fear, and fire-based attacks, +2 or better weapons need to hit, speak all languages, SA fire cone breath 10' by 30', Dmg 5d6 [save for ½ damage]). Rohzgan bought these guardians from the kender-Sivaks that had been frequenting the waystation for the past few months. The door to Rohzgan's chambers is locked.

x. Rohzgan's Chambers

The deepest room in the waystation is carved out of the bedrock and molded into a handsome bedroom and study, with a small library that stretches along the west wall in front of an elaborate work table. The table is piled high with crystal-line decanters and glass tubing. Candles and alcohol lamps illuminate the room and it is stuffy with their smoke.

Rohzgan can always be found here at night, with Quarti sleeping on the floor. The chance of meeting Rohzgan here during daylight hours is 35%. If he is in the room, or discovers someone pilfering his personal treasures, he fights to the death. No one except the guardian daemons (if they are still alive) can hear his calls for aid, since the guards and servants fear to enter the lower levels. He first casts *slay living* to kill and demoralize, then he turns to flame attacks, taking no heed of his possessions. Quarti fights with a dagger and will try to run away if wounded.

A search of this room uncovers two chests. The first is of teak and silver and radiates a magical aura, if such is checked for. The lock has been wiped with a greasy contact poison that causes 1d4 hours of

sleep. Inside are 2,350 sp and a jeweled brooch (500 sp value), along with two scrolls of black magic containing *animate dead* and *bestow curse*. The second chest is just locked and holds Rohzgan's important papers, I.O.U.'s, deeds signed over to him, papers of ownership for ships and buildings in Khuri-kahn, rental agreements, etc.

In a secret compartment under the stairs is Rohzgan's spell book (*hold person, charm person, flame blade, animate dead, call lightning, dust devil, find familiar, darkness, flaming sphere, wall of fire, and slay living*). The library holds tomes of vaguely evil titles, worth a total of 1d4 stl in the marketplace.

final notes

Rohzgan will throw any captured intruders into Room R from the trap-door in Room R. All the plotters are ruthless and cruel. They will gather forces and attack any spies found lurking in the corridors of the waystation.

Timing is very important in this adventure. The DM must pace the story to the capabilities of the PCs. For example, a very strong party may be able to withstand an assault by the wizard, minotaur, Khur warriors, draconians, and otter all at once. In this case, the DM should let the draconians and the minotaur escape with the necklace to carry out the kidnapping. This will continue the story with some hack-and-slash battles with minotaurs on the high seas, as well as a daring rescue of the young prince. If the PCs are fairly weak, then they will have to use brains instead of brawn. In this case, the DM might allow them to retrieve the necklace and fight with Rohzgan, perhaps facing Torando and his men while escaping. If the players are very fast, finding the main clues and retrieving the necklace too easily, then Warss can suggest substituting a fake necklace. This will give the opportunity to capture the slavers as they attempt to abduct the prince. It will also implicate the other tribes before the Kahn. Be sure to watch the moon phases of your campaign and apply the spell bonuses or penalties, as this may make a big difference in the outcome.

This adventure is best played with four to six characters of experience levels 1-3, with the presence of a ranger PC a definite advantage.

DM's Information

Tanglewood Keep is designed as a means to enable beginning adventurers from the DM's usual campaign to enter the world of Krynn. Through an unraveling of encounters and occurrences, the PCs will discover some of the unique features to be found only here.

As an alternative to the immediate pursuit of fulfilling the quest (that of obtaining an enchanted crystal to aid in returning home), the DM will be given the opportunity to drop the player characters directly into module DL1 if he desires, picking up the remainder of this adventure at a later point or abandoning it altogether in favor of presenting the entire *DRAGONLANCE*® saga.

Play opens in a small town of the DM's choosing, with the characters seeking lodgings at the Bed & Pillow Inn, the area's only hostel.

The Adventure

Lodgings at the Bed & Pillow are quite reasonable, the PCs will discover, with a single gold piece sufficient to provide meals and rooms for up to four characters.

On the lower floor of the inn, about a dozen patrons can be found enjoying a meal while a traveling minstrel performs on a mandolin. Dinner proceeds without incident until you notice an old peasant entering the building to speak with the proprietor. Thereafter, the innkeeper halts the minstrel's rendition of Greensleeves, asking those present to lend an ear.

Nervously clearing his throat, the old man begins his tale:

"I am Barnabas, elder from the hamlet of Nixx, which lies a short journey over the mountains from here. I have come on behalf of my people to beg assistance.

"Two months ago, we became aware of the presence of a giant dwelling in the Tanglewood, a large forest to the north of us. For a time, the creature contented itself with roaming the wood, but for the last fortnight it has taken to raiding our farms, stealing sheep, goats, and most recently a cow.

"Although a good witch also dwells in the Tanglewood, who no doubt would help us against the monster, we have not seen her in several months, and we have been afraid to enter and seek her out.

"The people of Nixx are simple folk, not warriors, and all fear the giant will soon become even bolder in his attacks. We have no goods of value to pay for mercenaries, but I ask if there are any here who would aid us against this foe."

Assuming the group agrees to assist Barnabas, he offers his thanks and suggests the adventurers get a good night's rest before beginning the journey to Nixx at dawn.

If asked for additional details about the giant, he can offer little. Nobody has actually seen it clearly, for the giant always attacks at night, and no one is really anxious to get close. Rumor, naturally, places the height of the creature at least on par with that of a house, and its huge footprints can be seen leading to and from the Tanglewood.

As to the "good witch" dwelling in the Wood, Barnabas is able to relate that she is a beautiful elf who sometimes assists the villagers as a healer and counselor. Especially popular with children, the nameless witch has a house somewhere within the wood, but she hasn't visited the village in several months.

Barnabas, a simple man, beds down in the barn, refusing a room if offered, and the group will find him up and ready to depart on their awakening.

Serf City, here We Come

The journey over the mountains to Nixx takes just over two days, with no significant encounters. Around noon on the third day, the party catches a glimpse of a large, green valley, with a forest encompassing most of its area to the north, while rolling hills of farmlands are seen to the west.

The descent into the valley is accomplished after a few more hours; in the late afternoon, the group arrives at the village.

Nixx hardly qualifies as a township, possessing no more than a few scattered farmhouses, along with a common meeting hall. The adventurers are brought to Barnabas's house, where they can stay the night if they please.

Soon after their arrival, the PCs are descended upon by 50 or so men, women, and children, anxious to catch a glimpse of the heroes who will put a stop to the marauding giant.

Footprints of the creature are pointed out; should there be a ranger present, allow a roll against his base tracking skill to note that the indentations were in fact made by an ogre.

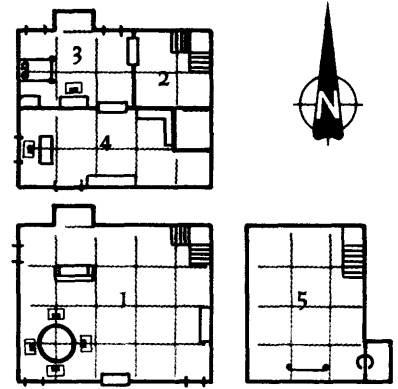
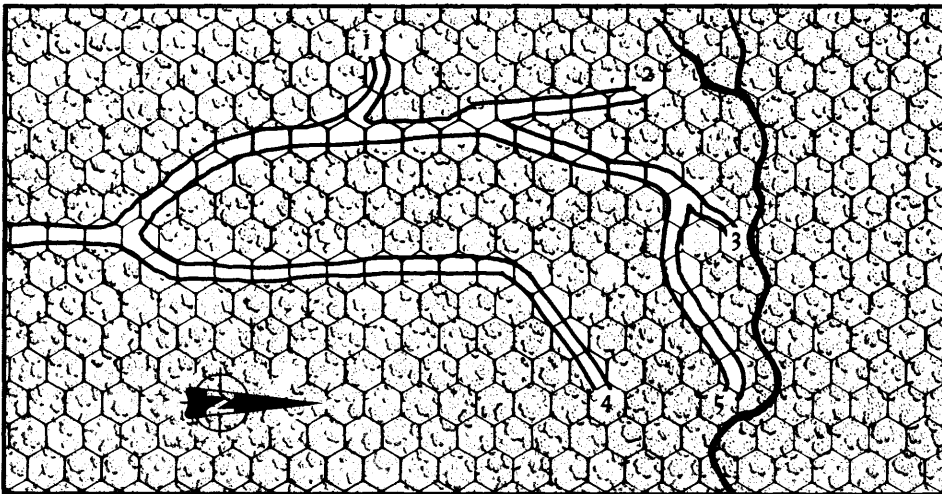
The inhabitants will urge the fellowship to waste no time in hunting down the giant, and at such time as the group chooses (probably the next morning), they may follow the tracks into the forest.

The Tanglewood

The Tanglewood is a large, coniferous forest some 80 miles long and half that wide. It abounds with creatures of the sort who might dwell in such an area, for food and water exist in abundance. Truly evil creatures are somewhat of a rarity, primarily due to the watchful presence of Stevie, the "good witch," who formerly dwelt there in a small house.

About six months earlier, Stevie, a magic-user fascinated with the study of other planes of existence, activated an enchanted mirror she'd acquired years previously and stepped through to the world of Krynn.

Unaware of the danger of prolonged

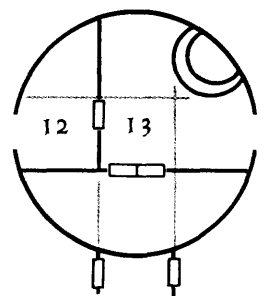
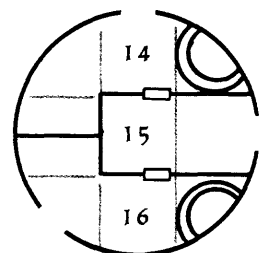
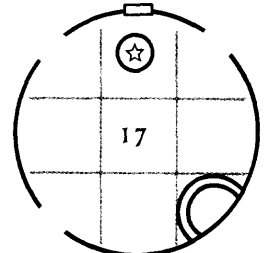
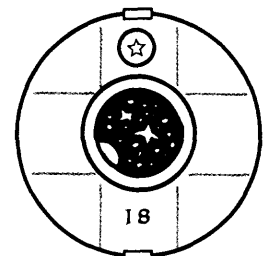
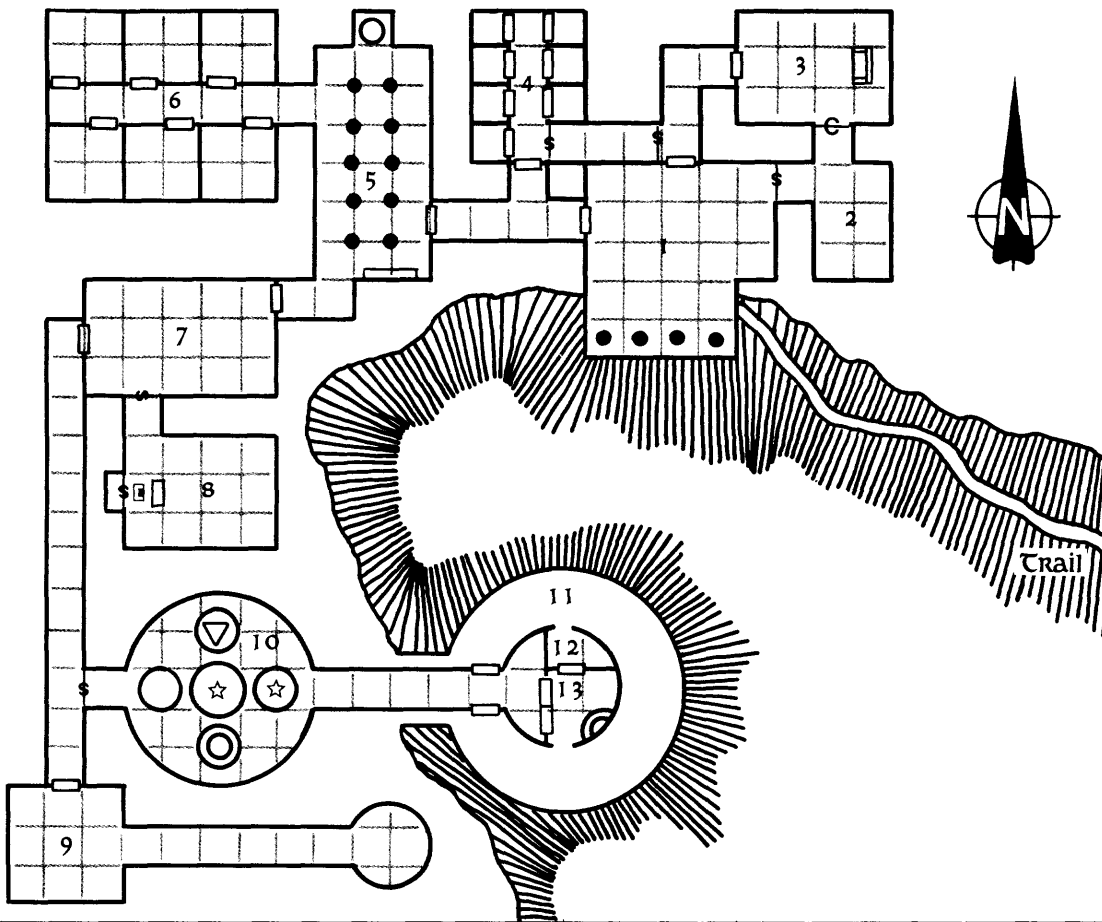


Stevie's Cottage

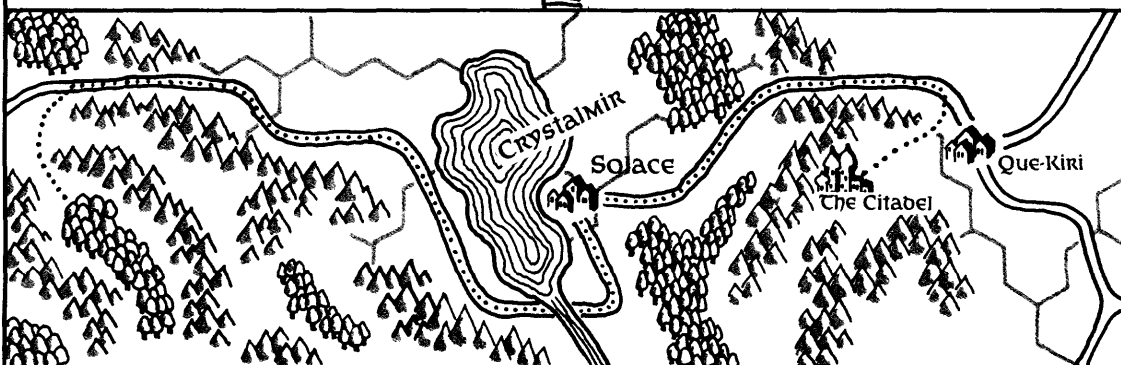
The Tanglewood

Scale: 1 Hex = 1 Mile

Tanglewood Keep



The Tower





exposure, she spent too long in exploration and found to her shock that she could not return through a similar mirror from which she exited. She was thrown into a time-warp and emerged in Krynn about the time of the start of the DRAGONLANCE® saga.

Eventually resigning herself to being trapped there, she settled down and built a house, moving the *mirror of portals* through which she emerged from an old wizard's tower into a drawing room in her new home.

A few months later in her old world, an ogre drifted into the Tanglewood from the mountains to the north. He soon found Stevie's deserted house and took up residence in the hidden cellar, where her first mirror lay.

Back on Krynn, Twill Topknot, Stevie's kender servant, accidentally activated the mirror, stepping through with Kitty, his pet cat. He was met on the other side by the hungry ogre and barely managed to escape, losing Kitty in the process.

Lost, hungry, and parted from Kitty, Twill has been sulking near the house for several days.

The ogre, who recently had been making a few forages down in the valley for food, adopted the kitten and promptly went out to steal a cow so that it might have milk. He, the kitten, and the cow presently reside in the cellar of the house, which the group must find and search.

Many Paths To glory

Initially, it will be easy even for a character with no tracking skills to follow the ogre's footprints into the Tanglewood, for they are quite clear in the soft ground. Eventually the tracks fade as the group encounters a rough trail with a number of branches.

Each time the party comes to such a fork, a tracking roll must be made to follow the footprints in the right direction (allow a bonus of 10% due to conditions of the trail). If the roll fails, the group must randomly choose a path to take, in the hope it is the correct one. Every time they encounter a subsequent fork which the ogre's trail passes, additional tracking rolls may be made to continue on or again

pick up his direction of travel.

Each of the trails leads to various points of interest.

* 1. This short trail ends after three miles at a rocky knoll, where a small opening may be seen amidst a group of boulders. The opening extends to a small cave, home to a cave bear minimal.

Cave bear minimal: AC 8; MV 8"; HD 2+2; hp14; #AT 3; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d3; THAC0 16; SA surprise on 1-3, hugs for 1d4+1 hit points; SD only surprised on a 1; MR +2 save vs. spell, save as 6+6 HD monster vs. poison or death magic; AL N (chaotic)

The minimal will not bother the adventurers unless they seek to explore the cave or prod objects into the opening. In this case, the minimal will certainly defend its territory as best it can.

The creature possesses no treasure.

* 2. At the end of this trail, the group comes upon a pleasant, green meadow on a bluff overlooking a stream. Quite a few berries, flowers, and bushes are to be found here, along with its 50 invisible inhabitants.

Sprites (50): AC 6; MV 9"/18"; HD 1; hp 3 average; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (bows) or 1d4 (dagger-swords); THAC0 20; SA sleep poison; SD become invisible at will, detect good/evil; AL N (good)

The reclusive sprites invisibly detect the party for evil, remaining hidden if none is found and communicating only with a good-aligned character if he separates from the rest of the adventurers (asking, in that event, the group's business, and if they would please depart from the glen). But if one or more evilly-aligned PCs are present, an attack is prepared, with ten unseen bowmen first launching a warning volley to persuade the PCs to leave, and thereafter peppering the intruders with their poison-coated arrows if the hint is ignored. The barrage continues until the PCs are either dead, asleep, or have departed by the way they came.

Non-evil PCs put to sleep by the sprites awaken 1d6 hours later, at forks 3 and 5 to the northeast. Evil characters, however, find themselves in the firm grasp of Frymdral, the treant at the end of trail 3, there to remain until someone comes to claim them.

* 3. This fork of the trail slopes downward in a northerly direction. If it is followed, the explorers shortly emerge on the banks of a stream, where a majestic oak tree towers above the bank. In actuality, it is Frymdral, a treant.

Frymdral: AC 0; MV 12"; HD 12; hp 80; #AT 2; Dmg 4d6/4d6; THAC0 9; SA animate trees; SD never surprised; AL CG

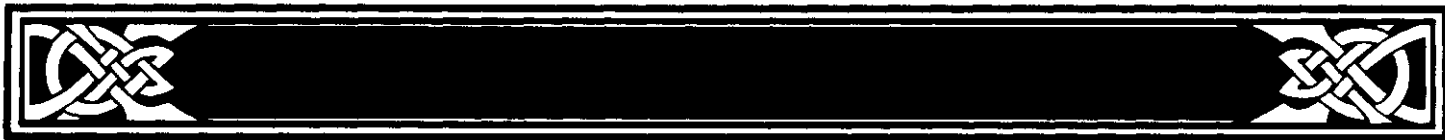
Frymdral, while a friend to many of the Tanglewood's natural inhabitants, is less than enthusiastic over the presence of outsiders. At first he ignores the PCs' presence unless they remain in the area longer than a few minutes. In this case, he will tersely ask that they move along so that he may enjoy the sun in peace and quiet.

If an evil PC was brought here by the sprites, the party will find their comrade solidly held within Frymdral's roots. Speaking in a deep, grandfatherly voice, the treant asks if the PCs wish to "claim this rascal, whom the sprites believe is certainly up to no good."

An explanation of the group's quest will gain the release of the character, as "any enemy of a tree-hating ogre must have some good in him."

About Frymdral's base grow several rare herbs with remarkable healing properties. Should a character with either *healing* or *plant* lore nonweapon proficiencies closely approach the treant, allow a single roll against the more favorable skill to note this. Frymdral will allow four herb pods to be picked if the group thereafter will depart. Each pod will heal 1d4 points of damage if crushed and applied to wounds (in addition to 1d3 points from the *healing* proficiency itself, if applicable).

The treant, if asked, will indicate where Stevie's house may be found. He



will not consider it odd that she hasn't been seen in such a short time-span as "mere months."

* 4. Many miles down this trail, the fellowship comes upon the ruins of a small castle. Scars of fire and lightning reveal that some struggle took place here many years earlier. (In fact this was Stevie's dwelling-place a generation ago; it was razed during a struggle with a dragon.)

If the ruins are explored, each character has a 5% chance of coming across a secret wall compartment in which is found a scroll of two magic-user spells: *identify* and *strength*, both of which are written at the 7th level of ability.

* 5. Stevie's house lies seven miles down this trail, just up from the stream. As the group comes within two hexes of it, a morose sobbing is heard up ahead. If investigated, the following description may be read.

Sitting upon a rock to the side of the road is a truly pathetic sight to melt the heart of even the most evil being: a small humanoid with a long ponytail is crying uncontrollably. He is attired in a leather jerkin. As you watch, he catches sight of you and his weeping becomes even more intense.

This is, of course, Twill Topknot.

Twill Topknot: AC 4; MV 12"; Thf 3; hp 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); THAC0 20; S 10, I 13, W 9, D 18, Cn 13, Ch 15; AL NG

If the fellowship inquires as to the little fellow's problem, the kender will explain between sobs that he lost his kitty, unaccountably producing a random PC's purse to show the kitten's color.

Further questioning will result in Twill's explaining that the "big guy" in the house ahead ran him off and has kept him from rescuing Kitty and going back home ("to Stevie's house," if asked).

If the group promises to help or otherwise look into the matter, Twill suddenly becomes vivacious and joyful. And whether or not they desire it, the fellow-

ship now has a four-foot shadow.

A couple of miles farther down the trail is Stevie's cottage, a two-storey brick structure with a decidedly elven look to it.

The simplest means of entry is through the door in the southern wall of the first floor.

Stevie's Cottage

* 1. Kitchen & living area. Inside the front door, the PCs find a comfortable living area. While the room shows clear signs of ravaging by some creature (scratches, smashed furniture, broken dishes, etc.), curiously, it seems as if something tried to clean up as best it could, for broken items are set in a jigsaw puzzlelike state, fitted back together as much as possible.

On the north side of the room, a couch sits before a fireplace; a number of shelves against the eastern wall hold dishes and plates. A table and chairs stand to the southwest. To the northeast, a stairway leads up to the second floor. A secret door is set into the western edge of the stairs, which lead down to the cellar.

* 2. Antechamber. Ascending the stairway brings the adventurers to an antechamber with two doors to choose from. The southern opens on to a linen closet (nothing of value within), while the western door leads to Stevie's chambers.

* 3. Bedchamber. This cheerful room holds a bed to the west, while a small fireplace is at the center of the northern wall. Against the southern wall is a door leading to the library, a dressing table and chair, and a closet filled with tattered clothing.

As with the room downstairs, signs of disorder are apparent, including a once-fine silken bedspread, apparently torn asunder and then dutifully mended. The source of this curiosity is found hiding in the eaves of the room, keeping a shy eye on intruders—a pair of booka.

Booka (2): AC 7; MV 12"/18"; HD ½; hp 3, 2; #AT Nil; Dmg Nil; THAC0

N/A; SA Nil; SD invisibility; MR 10%; AL N

Should the party gain surprise when entering, those in the doorway have a 25% chance of catching sight of one imp-like creature sitting atop a rafter. It then scampers into a darkened corner to hide. Its mate is hidden in the eaves over the doorway. Both creatures avoid the characters, using their power of *invisibility* to hide, seeking escape up the chimney if pursued.

* 4. Library. The door to this room is *wizard-locked*. Should the PCs be frustrated in entering, it is possible for a thief to leave through a window in the bedchamber and make a climbing roll to move across and enter through the library window.

However entry is gained, explorers face a potentially dangerous encounter: should anyone but a female elf set foot in the room, a writhing black tentacle will emerge from the floor, automatically entwining about the character and inflicting 1d2 points of damage per round until either it or the PC has died (-10 hit points or more for the tentacle).

Tentacle: AC 5; MV N/A; HD 4; hp 22; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; THAC0 N/A; SA Constriction; SD Nil; AL N/A

Within the room sits a writing desk near the west wall, while bookshelves line the northern and southern walls. A search of the room turns up a number of notes and calculations that apparently deal with the subject of planar travel through a unique theory of using a *dimension door* spell in conjunction with certain astronomical phenomena.

An examination of the books reveals much the same subject matter: treatises on planar travel, astronomy, and astrology, and quite a number of materials dealing with herb lore.

A wood-and-brass globe some five feet in diameter stands in the southeastern corner of the room, inscribed with planets, stars, and constellations. If a successful search for secret doors is made, a catch is discovered, allowing the top hemi-



sphere to be lifted open. Inside the hollow sphere is a sack holding 50 pp, 21 gp, 37 sp, a scroll of *protection from breath weapons (dragons)*, and a potion of *animal control*.

* 5. Cellar. From the stairway casing above, a secret door opens to steps leading down to the cellar. It is here that Tom, the ogre lately dwelling in the Tanglewood, has made a home with Betsy the cow and Kitty, Twill's cat.

Ogre: AC5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (club & strength bonus); THAC0 15; SA Nil; SD Nil; AL CE

Keeping a secure hold on Kitty, Tom will put forth his best effort to battle the party, but as he nears the end of his hit points, he stiffens, lets go of Kitty, and topples forward with Twill's kender knife buried in his lower back. The triumphant kender then joyfully rushes forward to be reunited with Kitty, and the adventurers may search the room.

While now a complete mess, it is clear this was once a magic-user's workshop, although Tom's inhabitation of the place has rendered otherwise valuable equipment worthless.

The one object of interest remaining in the room (apart from an extremely agitated cow) is a huge mirror against the southern wall. Reliefs of dragons, solars, demons, and ki-rin decorate a rune-covered mahogany frame, which is capped by a gargoyle's head, curiously missing its horn.

To the left of the mirror, the northeastern wall hides a secret chamber. If a successful check for concealed doors is made, it is noted that the wall here is oddly smooth, not at all like the rough stone used elsewhere in the cellar. This is the result of a *stone shape* spell used to hide treasure within the chamber. If dug at with a dagger or pick, a hollow will soon be revealed. Inside lies a locked chest that contains a crystal horn perfectly sized to fit the socket in the gargoyle's head.

Should he be questioned about the mirror, the kender will explain that it "looks the same way on the other side,"

and that the mirror is how he came to be here. (At this point, if it hasn't already been found, Twill will discover the hollow and retrieve the crystal horn.)

Remarking that it's about time he and Kitty made their way home, Twill places the horn in the head of the gargoyle, and the surface of the mirror takes on an opaque shimmering. (If a magic-user is observing, allow a save vs. spell, which if successful will allow the character to see a comfortable-looking parlor on the other side.)

Thanking the PCs for their help with a bear hug for everyone, the kender grabs the cow's tether (unless prevented), puts one foot through the mirror, pauses and then asks if the adventurers would like to meet Stevie. If so, they'll be enthusiastically instructed to follow him. If not, Twill will wave farewell and disappear through to the other side. Should the DM desire to exercise a bit of prompting, he may at this point inform a chosen player that his character spots an important possession peeking out from Twill's knapsack, such as a spell book ("Gee, it looked interesting, so I thought I'd read it"), weapon ("There's a weapons room at home where this would look great!"), etc. The party may then follow the kender through to Krynn while the portal disappears behind them.

*gee, ToTo,
We're NOT in...*

The group emerges in a large parlor, with a small library near a writing desk. A mirror identical to the one they stepped through stands against a wall.

If the DM at this point chooses to place the characters in the DRAGONLANCE® modules, Stevie is not present. A note is found atop the desk, addressed to Twill. It lightly rebukes him for having disappeared without an explanation. It goes on to explain that she has departed to attend an important wizards' conference.

Stevie's house is quite a bit larger than the one in the Tanglewood. The characters will find adequate room and provisions for guesting there until they decide upon a course of action. The reference materials in the library are similar to

those in the other house, although quite a bit of information on the world of Krynn may be discovered—including the fact that those who journey here from other planes of existence find it increasingly difficult to return home the longer they stay (this is penned by Stevie herself in a book on her knowledge of Krynn).

Clerics and druids immediately note the severance of contact between themselves and their deities, as well as the loss of any remaining spells. Once again, Stevie's treatise in the library can explain her curiosity over the apparent lack of true clerics in the world of Krynn, tracing this back to the events of the Cataclysm.

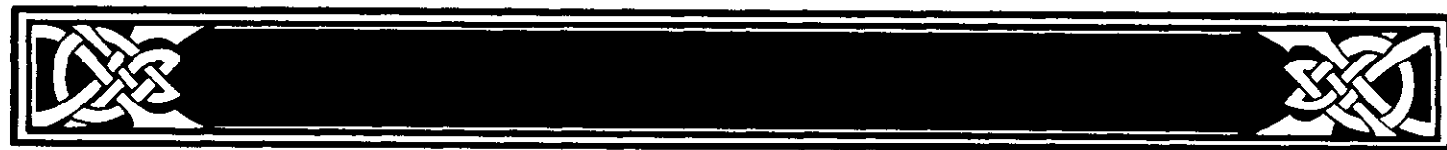
Entrance to Stevie's chambers and workshop will not be possible, because of heavy enchantments and *wizard locks* (which in most cases suffice to keep Twill out of areas he is best isolated from).

The kender, unfortunately, has no means of getting the party back home. The crystal horn he used to activate the mirror was the last Stevie possessed (he found it "thrown away" in a locked case at the back of her closet one day when she forgot to close the chamber door securely), and using the mirror to plane travel drained the crystal's power, turning it to dust.

Sooner or later, then, the adventurers will conclude that their best shot is to try to find Stevie in the hope that she can send them home before they are trapped. Twill's recommendation is that the group set out for a town a day's journey to the north (Solace), where may be found an inn she sometimes visits and stays at while awaiting the arrival of a sister wizard whom she often travels with.

The PCs may then set out for Solace, quickly leaving the outskirts of the Darken Wood (areas 22-26 on the DL1 map), where Stevie's house lies, to find themselves caught up in the events of *Dragons of Despair*. The DM may run Twill as a useful NPC, to play much the same part as Tasslehoff Burrfoot. The adventurers may then find Stevie at some future point of the DM's choosing.

If, however, the DM keeps this adventure entirely separate from the DRAGONLANCE® saga, moments after the last PC steps through the mirror and



the portal closes, the door to the parlor opens. Facing the group is an attractive female grey elf attired in white silken robes. Taking a startled glance at the strangers (including the cow, if it came), and the last shimmering of the mirror's surface, the elf looks over at Twill, squinting her eyes and shaking her head.

"Oops," the kender mutters.

Stevie: AC 3 (bracers); MV 12"; MU (white robes) 12; hp 46; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; THACO 16; S 10, I 19, W 15, D 13, Cn 15, Ch 18; AL NG; NW proficiencies – *healing, herb lore, direction sense, astrology* She possesses a *robe of eyes*, a *portable hole*, and a *carpet of flying*, among other magical items. She has the following spells memorized: *identify, magic missile, protection from evil, sleep, ESP forget, invisibility, web, fireball, lightning bolt, protection from normal missiles, suggestion, charm monster, polymorph self (x2), cloudkill, hold monster, sending, wall of force, chain lightning, globe of invulnerability, repulsion, charm plants, volley, demand.*

Over the next hour, the charming elf explains where the adventurers are, and she apologizes for Twill's allowing them to follow him back through the mirror (if such happened).

Explaining that she was indeed the witch of the Tanglewood, Stevie will tell the following story:

"About 30 winters ago, I acquired a device known as a *mirror of portals*. By using a crystal enchanted with a *phase door spell*, it is possible to use the mirror as a means to *teleport* virtually anywhere upon its native plane without limitation. The greater power of the mirror is that one may step through and emerge upon other planes where similar mirrors are to be found, although doing so drains the crystal of its power.

"I first entered this world of Krynn through the mirror in the cellar of my home in the Tanglewood. I stepped out of this mirror here, which had lain undiscovered for many years in the

abandoned keep of a dark sorcerer to the east. What I found after a time of exploring this new world—and it is this that I now warn you of—is that time works as a binding agent against intruders. The longer you remain on Krynn, the less likely it is that the mirror will be able to transport you back home.

"In my case, when I attempted to leave Krynn, I was thrown back. Since then, I have accepted the fact that here I am bound to remain. Thus, after I built this new home in what is known as the Darken Wood, I brought the mirror through which I entered this plane. Twill, with his innocent but regretful actions, caused your arrival. Now I fear there may be no means for you to return home, for the crystal he used to get to the Tanglewood was the last I possessed, and I haven't the means to fashion another."

The adventurers' best chances of reactivating the mirror, she'll add, is to search out the keep where it was originally housed, in the hope of finding a power crystal left behind by the wizard who once dwelt there.

If the DM has this adventure occur in Krynn's post-Raistlin period, Stevie will go on to explain the necessity for other-world clerics to come under the authority of a Krynn deity compatible with their alignments in order to regain clerical spells and the ability to turn undead. (She will, for those clerics who wish to, use her *carpet of flying* to fly them to appropriate clerics, where the PCs may obtain *medallions of faith* and instructions on clerical duties. This process will consume three days. Clerics who exercise this option will not suffer a level loss.)

Party magic-users are told how Krynn's three Orders of wizards function, and of the danger of being branded a renegade. (At least at this point, Stevie sees no reason why a PC should commit to a robbed order if he intends to depart Krynn as soon as possible. Should a longer—or permanent—stay be planned, she places the PC magic-users in contact with examiners from the appropriate orders.)

In regard to the keep that the group must seek out and search, Stevie draws a map from the Darken Wood to the keep. She adds that Twill is familiar with the area and can lead them to the Kiri Valley, where the citadel lies, if they desire a guide (a task the enthusiastic kender readily accepts). As for herself, she must depart in another direction to attend a gathering of her order, and so will be away for an indeterminate length of time. Should the party succeed in discovering a power crystal, all they need do is return here and place it in the gargoyle's socket. If all goes well, they need only step through and be home.

Off To See The Wizard

The fellowship may rest the night and then depart the following dawn. First to awaken is Twill, who is waiting anxiously at the front door with his traveling gear: a knapsack, hoopak, and a two-handed sword, which the kender will drag behind him. (It was given to him by a now-deceased barbarian, who asked that Twill hold it for him while he examined a supposedly empty anhkheg's burrow. He never came out, but Twill has dutifully kept the sword ever since, in case he runs into the barbarian again.)

Stevie's house lies in a secluded glen near Starnight Canyon (area 25 on the DL1 map). Twill leads the adventurers north to the main road that stretches between Haven and Solace. (No outdoor encounters are listed during this portion of the journey, for they would certainly depend on the time period the DM places the scenario in, and he may organize encounters according to his desires.) Turning east, the party eventually arrives in Solace, where they may, if they wish, visit the Inn of the Last Home and spend the night (although they may well be surprised that gold is valueless here!).

The next morning, they once again set out eastward, eventually by noon turning south to follow a ridge of mountains into the Kiri Valley (area 33 on the DL1 map). Many years ago, Voss, a black-robed sorcerer, built a keep here atop a mountain-side in the valley. Voss had committed an offense against another wizard, and a



battle between the pair took place here, with Voss proving to be the loser. His retainers abandoned the keep, and the Citadel of Que-Sanh, as Voss called it, quickly fell into a state of disrepair. The whole area has been shunned by travelers for years because of the knotted and bent trees that fill the valley, and the overall aura of unease that permeates it.

Currently the Citadel is in poor structural condition, with a number of unsafe areas within. (It would take many thousands of steel pieces' worth of repairs and months of labor to make it habitable again.)

The Citadel lies at one end of a box canyon, with most of the structure built into a steep cliffside. From the ground, only a landing and a tower that rests upon a spur of rock can be seen.

A narrow trail, part of which has been worn away by the passage of time, is the only means of reaching the landing. It is thus necessary for a character with climbing skills to make a successful Climbing Check in order to move across and affix a line for others to cross (failing the roll results in a 120-foot fall to the ground).

A description of the Citadel follows.

1. Landing

After braving the trail from the canyon floor, the explorers emerge onto a landing jutting out 20 feet from the cliffside. Four columns at its southern end support a stone roof. Two sets of stout, bronze doors can be seen to the north and west. If the area around the columns is searched, a skeleton is found against the western column's base. The skeleton is dressed in chain mail remnants. Apparently death came as a result of being hit with a crossbow bolt.

2. Priest's quarters

This was once the chambers of Voss's resident cleric. Rotted furniture and cobwebs now fill the room, but in the southwestern corner of the chamber is a 100-gallon tank of oil, with a spigot over a drain in the floor. (In time of siege, burning oil flowed out a drain to the trail outside, and then down it—causing no end of problems to those assailing the

keep from below.)

A concealed door at the northern niche of this room leads to the temple, while a secret door in the western wall allows quick access to the landing.

3. Temple

The door in the northern wall of the landing stands ajar. A corridor leads into the hillside. Just inside the doorway, a secret door leads into a connecting corridor to the Citadel's western wing.

Although the chamber was once finely decorated with mosaics and fine tapestries lining the walls, it is now filled with cobwebs from floor to ceiling, 20 feet above. Lairing here are a number of occupants.

Large spiders (20): AC 8; MV 6"/15"; HD 1+1; hp 4 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1 point; THAC0 18; SA poison; SD Nil; AL N

Any creature bitten by a spider must save vs. poison or suffer a 24-hour loss of 1d4 points of Strength (the character dies if his Strength goes below 3). Each round that is spent in exploration of the room results in a 1 in 6 chance of encountering one of the spiders.

At the eastern end of the temple lies a granite altar decorated with reliefs of various evil dragons. While no secret doors are in the altar, if several party members whose combined Strength exceeds 50 attempt to lift the altar, a hollow is found that holds the priest's treasure: 216 stl, 75 sp, 165 pp, 650 cp, and a gold cup decorated with steel wire inlay, valued at 20 stl.

On the wall before the altar lies a discolored spot the same size and shape as Stevie's mirror. This was, in fact, where she emerged from, later removing the mirror to her new home in the Darken Wood.

4. Cells

Seven cells are in this area. It is here that prisoners were once detained. All are completely empty now save for rotted straw and a few rats.

A secret door is set into the southeast-

ern wall, leading to a corridor between this and area 3. Midway down the corridor is the body of the Citadel's priest, with several crossbow bolts in his front and back. He still wears a set of chain mail +2, and at his side lies a mace +1 of black and silver (XP value 500/cash value 5,000).

Good-aligned characters find themselves overcome by nausea if they grasp the weapon, which radiates a slight aura of evil. Neutral characters may employ the mace, which through empathy reveals that it can cast a strength spell on the user once every 24 hours. The spell lasts for 10 rounds. Each time it is employed in combat, however, there is a 5% non-cumulative chance that a non-evil wielder's alignment will shift toward lawful evil.

5. Refectory

This chamber contains a series of low, arched pillars, with rotted and broken tables and benches strewn about. On the northern end of the room is a spigot attached to a large tank, formerly used as a cistern for storing rainwater. Hidden in the darkened recess behind the tank is a patch of oblixi, its presence difficult to detect unless a light source is thrust into the cavity and a careful look taken.

Oblivax: AC 10; MV 0"; HD 2 hp 10; #AT 0; Dmg 0; THAC0 NA; SA memory drain; SD May use captured spells; AL NE

As the party advances into this room, the oblixi attempts to steal the last 24 hours of memory from a random character, with a saving throw vs. spell avoiding the effects.

Finally, against the southeastern wall sits a large firepit and stove, inside which are several rusted, iron kettles and cauldrons along with some leaden pans.

6. Living quarters

Twenty men-at-arms and two lieutenants were once quartered here. All but the northwestern room hold nothing apart from dust and decay. The lieutenants' quarters, however, have a partially



collapsed roof. If explored, there is a 75% chance that anyone probing through the mess will cause the remaining ceiling timbers to fall inward, resulting in 2d6 points of damage.

7. Storage Room

Although many shelves and cases have collapsed over the years, it may still be deduced from the jumble of rusty weapons, tools, and equipment that this was once a store room. If a turn or more is spent searching, yet another body with nothing of value will be unearthed.

8. Library

The Citadel's library can only be reached through a secret door in the storeroom, located behind a cupboard that swings outward to allow passage beyond. Three-quarters of the chamber walls are taken up by long bookshelves, filled with tomes and scroll cases. A desk is seen near the western wall of the room, beyond which hangs a black velvet tapestry embossed with a silver "V" (value 20 stl). Behind the tapestry is set a secret panel, which opens into a small compartment holding the following treasure: a dagger-sized *hornblade* +2, a *Zagy's* spell component case (useable twice daily), a *shadow lanthorn*, and a scroll with several magical spells (*magic missile*, *mount*, *read magic*, *run*, *sleep*, all written at the 7th level of ability).

Voss's huge spell book lies atop the desk, where he left it just before leaving the library to do battle. Unfortunately, the black leather cover with its silver inlaid "V" is all that remains; the pages within are peppered with small holes.

A search of the desk reveals nothing of interest. An examination of the bookshelves reveals the same disappointing damage to the valuable writings—small bore-holes, which are caused by the library's sole occupant: a bookworm.

Bookworm: AC 2; MV 12"/3"; HD ¼; hp 1; #AT 0; Dmg 0; THAC0 NA; SA surprise 95% of the time; SD camouflage; AL N

Each turn the party is within the cham-

ber, there is a 25% chance the bookworm will attach itself to a paper-carrying PC (with magic-users preferred), thereafter seeking out something to eat.

9. Workroom

Double doors lead to what was once a workroom. The equipment and tables are now smashed beneath rubble that has fallen from above; each round the room is occupied, there is a 20% chance that a chunk of rock breaks free from the roof, striking a random explorer for 1d3 points of damage.

A long corridor leads from the eastern wall to a circular chamber, an examination of which reveals signs of scarring and damage. This was formerly a testing-ground for new damage-causing spells, although to attempt such at this time would certainly bring down the whole roof in this area.

10. Conjunction Room

This room and the Citadel's tower can be reached by one of two means: through a secret door in the outer hall or by a character with climbing skills making his way from the outer platform (1) to the base of the tower (11) and entering through either of a pair of doors.

The entire floor of the conjunction room is scribed with various sorts of circles of protection and summoning, but at the center of the pentagram to the east is an occupant.

Dretch: AC 2; MV 0 or 9"; HD 4; hp 20; #AT 0 or 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1; THAC0 15; SA spell use; SD Nil; MR 30%; AL CE

One of Voss's apprentices was busy conjuring forth the dretch when the alarm of an attack was sounded. With only the creature's head poking forth from the circle, the mage interrupted the conjunction and made his way to the tower platform, where he eventually died. A more powerful being from the lower planes might easily have fought his way through and then left the circle to wreak havoc, but the relatively weak dretch found itself trapped between planes and

has helplessly waited here for untold years.

The creature is willing to say anything to get someone standing before the circle to order it to either complete its entry to this plane or else depart. The DM in this regard must pay careful attention to anything said that could be construed as an order releasing the creature and granting it permission to leave the circle. "Show us where the treasure is," for example, would permit the dretch both to come forth onto the Prime Material plane and leave the circle to immediately attack the foolish individual who dared command it without the proper spells and precautions. "Leave this place," on the other hand, would cause the dretch to sink into the floor and return to its own plane.

A character stepping into the circle will break the magical binding of the creature, allowing it to enter the plane and attack or return home (50% chance of either).

While the dretch may be helplessly slain by magic or missile weapons from outside the circle, no experience is gained from doing so.

11. Landing

Down a long hallway from the conjunction room, two doors lead out to the circular landing at the base of the Citadel's tower. Just outside the northern door are the remains of a magic-user, collapsed against the charred tower wall. This was the conjurer of the dretch, who quickly fell prey to a *fireball*. The body has nothing of value on it.

12. Conference Room

A triangular table is at the center of this room with three padded chairs. Meetings between Voss and his apprentices once took place here.

13. Entry

Double doors give access to a platform lift up to the second level. Those desiring to ascend need only step upon the stone slab and say the word "Up." They are then lifted up to the semi-circular hole in the ceiling and can step out onto the sec-



ond floor landing (any left below may summon the lift back by calling out the word "Down").

14. apprentice's Chambers

These were the quarters of the now-dead mage on the landing. A *wizard lock* prevents easy access into the room (although a thief could scale the outer wall of the tower and force his way through the closed shutters). Against the southwestern wall is a bed, beneath which lies a chest filled with rotted clothing. Against the northeastern wall sits a writing desk atop which is a book entitled *The Art of Summoning, Vol. I* by Fistan-dantilus. If a magic-user able to cast conjuration spells of at least 3d level studies the book over a period of time, there is sufficient information given to learn the *monster summoning I* spell. A faded note next to the book reads: "Return to Library:"

15. Landing

Another lift up to the third level is seen to the south, along with two doorways.

16. apprentice's Chambers

These quarters are similar to those across the hall, although no interesting reading materials are to be found.

17. Voss's quarters

The third floor of the tower was taken up by Voss exclusively. Before an inscribed pentagram, stands a full-length mirror not unlike Stevie's, although there are no provisions for placing a crystal horn in any sockets. If checked, it does radiate magic. In fact it was created by Voss, based on his greater *mirror of portals*.

A permanent *dimension door* spell has been enchanted into the mirror's face. Anyone standing within the pentagram and speaking the word "Up" causes a shimmering to appear. As many as five people may then step through and emerge in the topmost level (others must use the same process to join those preceding them).

Against the eastern wall stands a writ-

ing desk, its many papers yellowed and crumbled with age. Protruding from the wall above the desk is a black cloth covering a bulbous shape which in turn is attached to a wooden shaft. If the covering is removed, a mace with a *continual light* spell upon it is found.

Against the southern wall stands Voss's large bed, now collapsed into pieces.

A locked wardrobe is set against the western wall. (Because the lock is rusted, thieves suffer a -10% penalty to pick the lock, although it may be pried open without harm.) Inside the wardrobe, amidst old clothes and boots, hangs a black robe with shining silver trim—and a silver "V" over the right breast. A permanent *clean* cantrip has been cast on it, so the robe will never soil or look dirty.

18. Observatory

The topmost floor of the Citadel, entirely sealed away from the light of the outside world, was restricted to all but Voss himself. An evil darkness permeates the chamber, causing torches to illuminate no more than a 10-foot area. *Light* spells do not function here. Before the mirror and floor pentagram lies a pit 10 feet across. The feeble light of a few stars is overshadowed by a spherical shape of utter blackness, supernaturally more intense than the darkest cave. This is the black moon of Krynn.

A wizard of the Black Robes who enters this chamber casts all spells at maximum effectiveness. Further, he regains spells in half the time usually required.

Unknown to the party, however, this chamber is lair to the keep's last original inhabitant—Brutus, Voss's monster familiar.

Shadow mastiff: AC 6; MV 18"; HD 4; hp 32; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; THAC0 15; SA baying causes panic; SD hide in shadows; AL NE

The mastiff attacks when the party enters the chamber, gaining surprise on its randomly chosen target. It then fades back into the shadowed area of the room. There is only a 60% chance each round that the creature may actually be seen

clearly enough to be attacked. Because of the difficulty in seeing the beast, 2 should be added to the mastiff's initiative roll.

The vicious beast avoids using its baying weapon unless wounded below 10 hit points. It prefers to rely on the favorable conditions and its bite to overcome the intruders.

Should he be slain, Brutus reforms in 24 hours, emerging out of the pit to resume his guardianship.

If a search of the room is made, a shelf is found against the southern wall. On it rest two crystal horns usable in Stevie's mirror and a bone scroll case with the following spells on a scroll within: *lightning bolt* and *polymorph self*, both written at the 10th level of ability.

Exit from the room may be gained by standing within the pentagram and speaking the word "Down," which results in the mirror transporting characters out the companion mirror in room 17.

fly The friendly Skies

On leaving the Citadel, the group comes across an odd sight in the canyon below:

On the canyon floor below you is a truly remarkable sight—an 80-foot-diameter, floating red sphere is tied by an equally huge net to what looks to be a boat fixed to the ground by an anchor. Graceful, bird-like wings rigidly extend out to both sides of the craft; amidships there appears to be some sort of kiln or boiler from which an exhaust pipe leads into the red sphere. About a dozen small humanoids swarm around various parts of the strange contrivance, and you can hear the ringing sounds of hammers striking metal.

This is the *Wind Flier*, proud creation of a dozen tinker gnomes from Mount Nevermind. If the adventurers approach and call out, they will cheerfully be greeted by the ship's captain and inventor, who will begin an hour-long recitation of his name unless interrupted (he'll allow



the party to call him Tinker for convenience).

After social amenities are out of the way, Tinker will introduce his ship and crew :

"This is the *Wind Flier* my most marvelous invention which lets you fly with the wind naturally. We come from Mount Nevermind and aren't really sure where we are right now although if you could tell us we would be grateful."

He will go on to say that he landed the vessel to repair a damaged wing, and that if the party desires, they may certainly catch a ride. If queried as to his planned direction of travel, Tinker moistens his finger, lifts it up to check the wind direction, and answers "West."

Should the adventurers board the craft, they find a bicycle-like set-up has been installed near the stern of the ship. Six gnomes, pedalling away, cause a complicated series of cables and pulleys to manipulate the wings in an awkward flapping motion. This "efficient" system, Tinker will brag, allows the *Wind Flier* to sail along just about as fast as the wind itself! A wood furnace amidships feeds hot air into the silken balloon above, and although it is somewhat smoky, the craft can rise up to about 6,000 feet. A small forward cabin holds supplies.

The PCs may join Tinker at the stern, where he will take firm grasp of a tiller and then call for the crew to cast off. A gnome on the ground a few feet below the ship then loosens the anchor and (barely) climbs back aboard as the *Wind Flier* takes to the air, its wings flapping away.

If the DM allows, the gnomes drop the PCs more or less in the general vicinity of the Darken Wood. They may then hike back to Stevie's house.

Concluding The adventure

If the adventurers have acquired the crystal needed to activate the mirror, they may leave Krynn (either arbitrarily or the DM can make a group check based on a 1%/day failure probability formula). If they have failed to achieve their quest, a whole new world of adventure lies before them!

New Magic *Mirror of Portals*

The origin of these mirrors remains lost in the distant past. Some savants believe a single wizard with a passion for interdimensional travel constructed a number of these devices as gates to those worlds that were of interest to him. Still others assert independent creation of the mirrors on various planes, believing it unintentional that each appears linked to others of its ilk. Whatever the case, it is a fact that there have been no reports of two similar mirrors on the same plane.

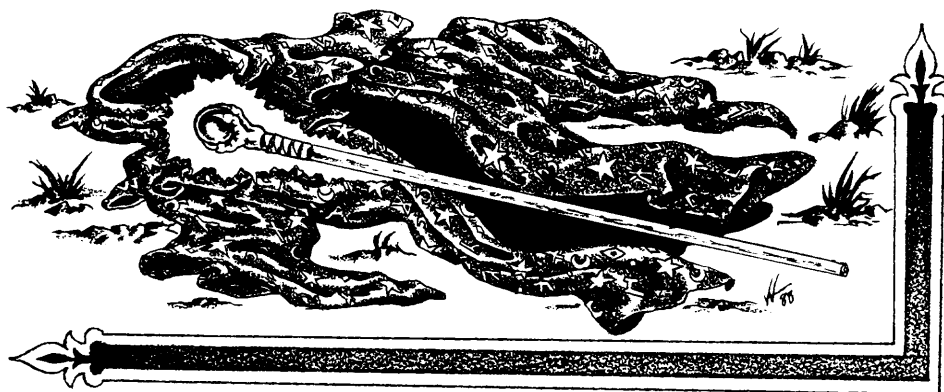
All mirrors of portals stand about seven feet tall and five feet wide. The frames holding the glass are always decorated with reliefs of various creatures (dragons, ki-rin, demons, devils, etc.), with ebony or teak the wood usually found in their construction.

Each mirror has a carving of a horned creature with a missing horn. If a crystal horn with a *phase door* spell is placed in the empty socket, the mirror becomes active. A magic-user familiar with the mirror's operations may then manipulate the reliefs on the frame, tuning the mirror in on various others of its sort, and getting a picture in the glass of the other mirror's surroundings as viewed out its face.

When the mirror is activated (to a maximum duration of three rounds), up to ten human-sized characters may then step through, exiting from the receiving mirror (although doing so completely drains the sending mirror's crystal of power). This is possible even if the receiving mirror is not activated.

The mirror may also be used as a means to open a gate to a known place on its home plane. A magic-user not in possession of instructions on the mirror's use, however, has but a 15% chance of doing this successfully. (It is possible to research the mirror's mode of operation at a cost of 2,000-8,000 gp and 2d6 months of time.) This does not drain the crystal of its power, although the mirror may be used in this manner but once per week. (Note that should the magic-user choose not to step through the mirror, it thus could be used as a scrying device, but only of places known to the user.)

Experience/cash value: 1,000 xp/
10,000 stl



Notes on Zhakar

Geography

Zhakar is the name of both a hidden valley and the fortified city that lies on a river near its eastern end. The river rises from springs deep within the mountains and runs west through the valley, disappearing beneath the mountains.

The valley of Zhakar is surrounded by high, unclimbable mountains. It is almost totally cut off from the outside world. There are only three routes into the valley. They lead up steep and treacherous mountain paths and through deep and dark tunnels cut through rock. These ways are guarded by watch posts.

The soil of the valley is fertile and well suited to cultivation. The climate of the valley enables the survival of plants that are normally only found much farther north. The rock of the mountains is hard and difficult to work, but it contains great riches. Iron is mined from the mountains and worked in the many villages all along the river. Steel armor of excellent quality is the main result. Gem stones are also found, especially emeralds, which the dwarves of Zhakar prize greatly.

a Short history

The city of Zhakar is an old city, older than Thorbardin. It began as a small mining settlement, inhabited by dwarves who had come to that part of the Khalkist Mountains looking for gems. They found emeralds, but more importantly they found a rich vein of iron ore. Zhakar became the capital of a powerful dwarven kingdom that specialized in the trade of iron and gems. Within its massive walls, Zhakar was a city of wondrous stone buildings that seemed to have grown from the rock; there are underground carved chambers that looked for all the world like natural caves. In fact, most of the city was under ground.

This all changed with the coming of the Cataclysm. Passes through the mountains were closed, tunnels collapsed, and villages in the valley were destroyed by rock slides. The city itself was cracked and battered; many of the underground

chambers caved in, the towers fell down, and the walls cracked. It still stood, but just barely. The dwarves of Zhakar knew that beyond the wall of the mountains things were far worse. Indeed, for many years they believed that the rest of the world had been destroyed.

The dwarves felt alone, and they grieved for their brothers who they thought were dead (they still grieve to this day). They were filled with sorrow when they looked upon their once-beautiful city and saw how cracked and ugly it had become. Then they felt anger. They felt hatred for the outsiders—the elves, the humans, the kender—all of the races that had brought the Cataclysm down upon the world. The anger passed, but the hate did not.

There seemed to be little point in doing anything. The dwarves became more and more morose, fatalistic, and apathetic. They saw little hope of their world ever returning. They had no purpose to their existence. They would have faded away, but for the coming of the Worm.

The Coming of The Worm

Many years ago, a young dwarf, whose name is long forgotten, was thinking melancholy thoughts as he wandered deep into the mines. He found that the gloomy darkness of the tunnels matched his mood and he felt at ease there. He went ever deeper, the way becoming more and more difficult. His progress demanded more and more effort and he began to tire. Fatigue forced him to stop, to sit down and rest for a moment. He was so tired, he fell asleep.

As he slept, he dreamt. He saw a vast cavern beneath Zhakar; filling that cavern was a Worm whose writhing form was forever cloaked in darkness. He sensed great power emanating from the Worm. His vision of the Worm faded, then he saw himself clambering over rocks, through small gaps between boulders, crawling through mud-filled tunnels until finally he found himself standing on the top of the mountains. He looked one way and he saw the valley of Zhakar, he looked the other and saw

lands filled with hated men.

The dwarf woke, amazed by the dream. This Worm that he had seen, if it truly existed, it must be a god, given the great power he had felt emanating from it. If the world outside the valley had not been totally destroyed, what had become of it? The young dwarf was full of questions, but inside he felt that he had found an answer and a purpose. If this Worm was a god, then he would worship it.

He had more dreams. In them he saw many things. He saw that the dwarves of Zhakar would be great once again if they worshiped the Worm. He saw that the Worm was hungry and that it wanted to be fed. He saw more of the world beyond the mountains; he saw how the people who dwelt there were weak and confused. Eventually he saw the way to the way to the Cavern of the Worm. He saw himself becoming the first Priest of the Worm.

The Cult of The Worm

Once the rest of the dwarves were convinced of the existence of the Worm, they were only too glad to find some purpose in life by worshiping the Worm. A priesthood was formed to tend to the spiritual needs of the community and provide an effective leadership. The young dwarf became known as the Priest of the Worm and his true name was forgotten.

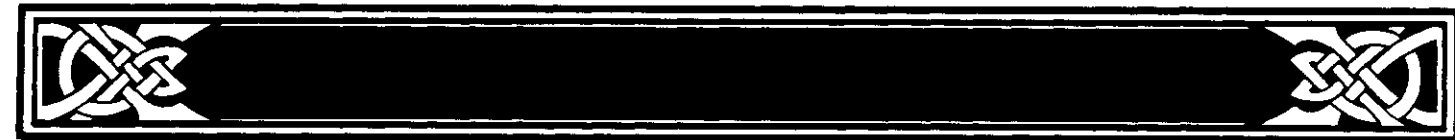
The priests also had to keep the Worm fed. They fed it with humans and elves captured in slaving raids. The few dwarves they've captured on these raids are believed to be derro—hideous half-breeds who lived among mankind. They are considered beneath contempt, as they cannot be true dwarves.

Although the Priests of the Worm have no spell abilities, they have knowledge of fungal poisons and worms of all kind (see below for more details).

The adventure

This adventure is designed for 4 to 5 characters of 8th to 9th levels. Ideally, none of the player characters should be clerics.

The adventure is set after the War of the Lance. Now that the True Gods have



returned, clerics travel the length and breadth of Ansalon, bringing the news to all people. A group of low-level clerics, their followers, and a few escorting heroes set out on a journey to bring word of the gods to the inhabitants of Khur, or some such place. The exact starting point and destination do not matter greater. What matters is that the journey takes them through the foothills of the Khalkist mountains.

The god worshiped by the clerics and their followers depend to some extent on the nature and alignment of the PCs. For instance, if the PCs are evil, it is most improbable to have them escorting worshippers of Mishakal. This is an adventure for more heroic characters.

The Missionaries

The band of clerics and their followers numbers 21. They are led by Kastir, a young cleric from the area of Tarsis. He is assisted by five 1st-level clerics (all W 13, hp 4, AC 4. They wear chain mail and carry shield and footman's mace. Select one spell for each.). They also have attracted some 15 lay-followers (0th-level noncombatants), who feel a religious calling but lack the necessary qualities to become clerics. They do various jobs, such as cooking, gathering firewood, tending the clerics' horses, and carrying equipment. They travel on foot, as a sign of their humility.

NPC Capsule—Kastir

Kastir, Worshiper of Mishakal: AC 4; MY 9"; C4; hp 17; S12, I13; W16; D8; Cn11; Ch15; AL NG; Spells: 1st level: *bless*, *cure light wounds* (x2), *light*, *remove fear*. 2d level: *Chant*, *hold person*, *resist fire*, *slow poison*; Carries a shield, footman's mace, and assorted religious paraphernalia. Has a scroll of *cure disease*.

Kastir wears chain mail over a sensible brown thick tunic. On his head he wears a small helmet. He has long unkempt hair that is the color of straw. His blue eyes appear somewhat vacant. His face is covered in pockmarks, the result of a childhood disease.

He is a young, idealistic man, filled with a deep desire to help those in need and right the wrongs that exist. He regards it as his duty to bring word of the True Gods to all and sundry. He is also impulsive, often speaking without thinking, and has a habit of getting himself into trouble. He annoys some people intensely, although most find him to be pleasant, charming, and amiable.

Although supposedly the leader of this group, he has little experience in leading men. He will often ask the heroes for advice.

The Journey

So far the travelers have had a relatively easy time. They have met small groups of bandits and marauders, but these were quickly run off by the heroes. Occasionally they have come across tracks made by draconians, but they've not met any, yet.

Slaver attack

The missionaries and the PCs have set up camp for the night.

Night will soon be upon the camp. The sun set some time ago and the sky is becoming darker. People are getting ready to turn in for the night or huddle close to the fire.

Suddenly, a cry rings out. One of the lay missionaries drops to the ground, a crossbow bolt protruding from his back. More bolts whiz through the air, coming from some undergrowth to the south.

Slaving Party

This consists of 23 neutral evil dwarven fighters (MV 9") armed with light crossbows and short swords. Half also have spears, while the other half carry nets. All have shields.

One 8th level: S 18/15, D 16; hp 52; AC -4 (*splinted mail* +3 *shield* +2); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+5 (Str bonus and *short sword* +2); wears *ring of fire resistance*.

One 6th level: S 17; hp 38; AC 1 (*chain mail* +3; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (*spear* +1; wears a *brooch of shielding* (absorbs

up to 72 points of *magic missile*).

Two 5th level: hp 25, 30; AC 1 (*splinted mail* +2 and *shield*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (*short sword* +1)

Three 4th level: hp 12, 18, 24; AC 3 (*chain mail* +1 and *shield*)

Five 3d level: hp 8, 9, 15, 16, 18; AC 4 (*scale mail* +1 and *shield*)

There are also four fighter/thieves armed with light crossbows, short sword, and dagger. They wear leather armor and camouflaged cloaks (MV 12').

One 4th/4th level: S 17 D 18; hp 30; AC 2 (Dex bonus plus *ring of protection* +2); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+5 (Str bonus plus *short sword* + 4)

Three 3d/3d level: D 16; hp 18, 21; AC 6 (Dex bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (*short sword*)

The four fighter/thieves have split off from the main group in order to lure the PCs away. When the PCs advance on the four, the rest of the slaving party attacks, attempting to capture as many of the missionaries as possible. The missionaries are all surprised and are easy prey, although a couple of the 1st-level clerics put up some valiant opposition. Kastir is captured whatever happens. Using their thief abilities, the four dwarves then try to get between the PCs and the missionaries. The main group of slavers tries to bundle away their captives while the PCs are tied down.

If the PCs look like they might foil the raid, the dwarves will use crossbow bolts covered with sleep poison (-4 on save, failure induces sleep for 4d4 turns, save reduces Strength and Dexterity by 4 for same period). Each dwarf with a crossbow carries two of these bolts.

The dwarves would normally kill the PCs if they fall asleep (the dwarves of Zhakar are very careful to ensure that Zhakar is not discovered by outsiders). However, the dwarves spot a group of some 20 draconians in the distance. They leave quickly, trusting that the draconians will find the PCs and deal with them. (If the PCs fall asleep, you could have the dwarves steal any magical items that you don't want to PCs to have any more.)



Pursuit

Read the following aloud to the players after the PCs awaken from the poison-induced sleep.

Much of the camp has been ransacked. The few tents have been ripped and broken. Pots are smashed and anything of value has been stolen. Much of the food has been taken, the rest has been kicked around on the ground. A trail of footprints, disturbed vegetation, and an occasional spot of blood lead north toward the mountains.

The dwarves were in a hurry to leave the area. They've not taken much care to cover their tracks. A ranger or druid would have no trouble following the trail, but others might have some trouble (10 % chance of losing trail). If the PCs follow at night, it will be even more difficult, and they'll run the risk of attracting the attention of draconians.

The trail ends at a gravel-bedded stream. However, on a rock somewhat upstream of the PCs, something red

attracts their attention. If the PCs investigate it more closely, they recognize it as a headband worn by one of the lay-missionaries. Further upstream, observant characters note other small possessions placed on rocks and the like. Obviously the dwarves and their captives have waded their way along the stream.

The stream can be followed upstream for about a quarter of a mile before it reaches a large rock outcrop.

You follow the stream until you reach a rock outcrop. It has a smooth, sheer face and is probably unclimbable. Behind it lies the mountains.

The stream flows more quickly here and has cut a canyon through the rock. It is still shallow at this point and can be easily waded through.

The stream can be followed up the canyon, but progress is not easy. Trying it in the dark could be lethal; a slip and someone might smash his skull open on the rocks. In places the stream has carved deep pools; in other places the canyon narrows to a few feet through which the

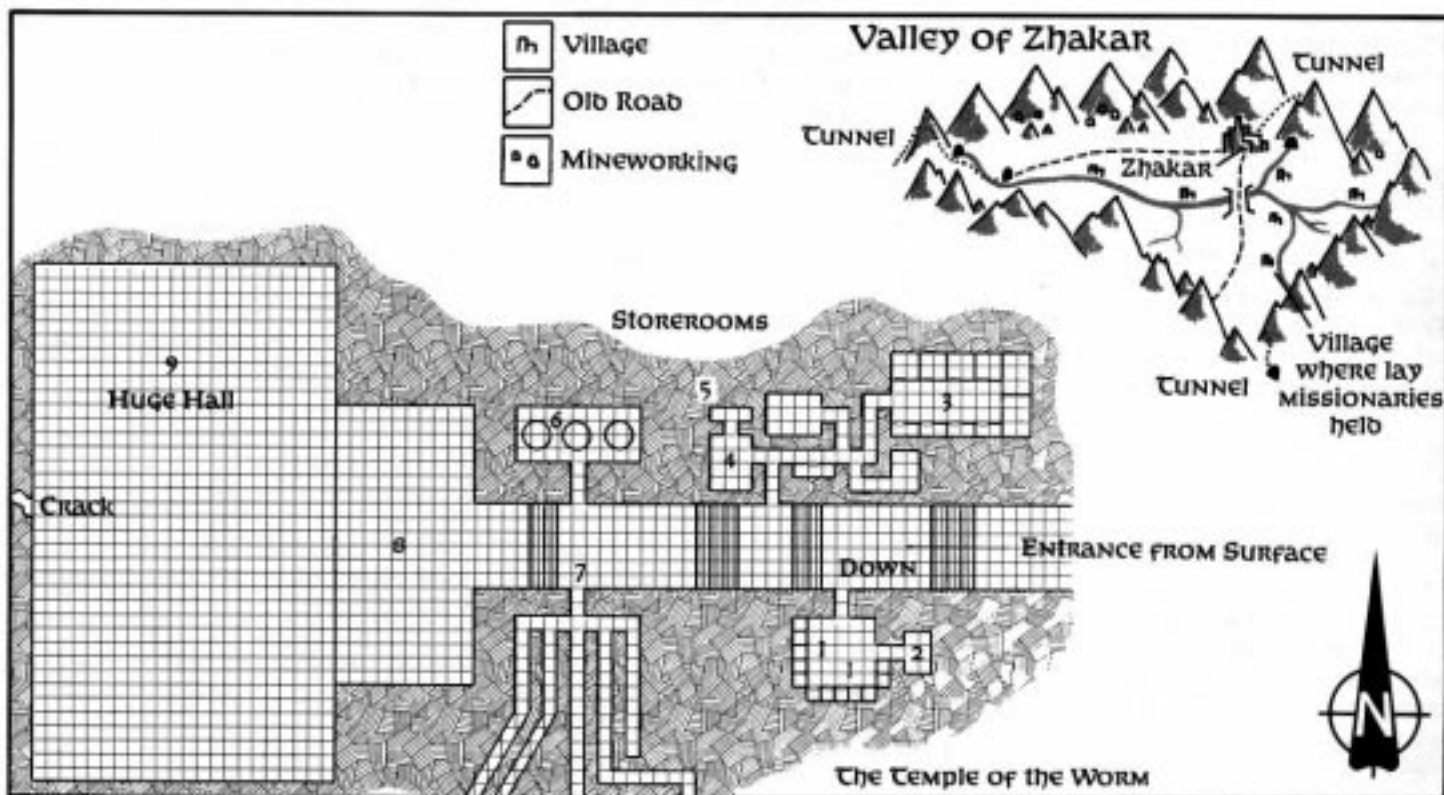
stream flows powerfully.

A series of steep steps cut into the rock lead up the canyon. If the PCs follow the canyon any farther, they find a very high waterfall. There is no cave behind the waterfall. The steps lead up for several hundred feet, and are very exposed.

The steps lead out onto the top of the outcrop.

You are now on top of the outcrop. It is flat and smooth, several miles long and about half a mile wide. A few plants struggle to keep a foothold. To the south it falls away as a cliff; to the north is the base of one of the Khalkist Mountains. Several rock slides have come down and spilled out onto the outcrop. At the base of the mountain is dark cave entrance. The stream you followed runs out from the cave mouth. Even from here you hear the occasional high pitched twittering and squeaking of bats deep within the cave.

The stream flows from the cave and over the top of the outcrop before tumbling down a waterfall.





Asleep in the caves are many thousand ordinary bats. Among them are five mobats. They are harmless during daylight, although they could pose a problem to anyone in the area around dusk and dawn. Entering the cave during the day with a torch wakes the bats. They fly around wildly and the wind from their wings puts out any torches. The noise is loud enough to drown out all other sounds.

Five Mobats: AC 7 (2 outside cave); MV 3"/15" (MC: C); HD 6; hp 24, 24, 26, 29, 32; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA surprise 50%, screech; AL N(E); MM2, p. 15

If the PCs decide to follow the stream deeper into the cave, they find progress impossible. The cave roof slopes down until it is below the surface of the stream. The tunnel from which the stream emerges is only about a foot high.

After a while on the outcrop, one of the PCs spots something shiny among one of the rock slides. It is a spoon dropped by one of the missionaries. Hidden from view among the rubble is a tunnel entrance. This tunnel leads into the mountain, passing through several caves. The way is fairly obvious, as a path has been made. Walking through these caves with a torch or lantern panics the cave crickets that live here.

Seven Cave Crickets: AC 4; MV 6" (+ 3" hop); HD 1+3; hp 4, 4, 5, 5, 6, 7, 9; #AT nil; SA jump/kick; AL N; MM2

These crickets have a 1 in 6 chance of landing on character for 1d4 points of damage. Otherwise, roll to hit for accidental kick for 1d4 points of damage.

In one of the caves, there is a stairway that leads up inside the mountain to a watch post near the top of the mountain. If the PCs choose to venture up there, they find no one, but there are signs of recent use.

Discovery of Zhakar

You emerge from the tunnel to find yourselves on a ledge high above a green valley. You see a river winding

through the valley and groups of buildings grouped along its course. A patchwork of fields covers most of the valley floor. To the north are the ruins of what once might have been a beautiful city.

A narrow path leads down, hugging the steep mountain side.

Anyone walking along the path during the day stands a 50% chance of being spotted by someone in the valley. If it appears that the PCs have been captured by a raiding party and are being brought to Zhakar, then no more will be done. If they look like intruders, then a patrol will be waiting for them. Use the dwarven patrol described in the following random encounters.

Once the path reaches the valley floor, it continues toward the nearest village.

Traveling in The Valley

While the PCs are in the valley, they stand a 1 in 10 chance of having a random encounter. Check every half hour. If the alarm has been raised by the dwarves, the PCs encounter a patrol on rolls of 1-9.

Random Encounters (roll 1d10)

D10 Roll Encounter

- | | |
|-----|-----------------|
| 1-3 | Slave, friendly |
| 4-5 | Slave, informer |
| 6 | Wild Animal |
| 7 | Dwarven Patrol |
| 8-9 | Dwarf |
| 10 | Troll |

Most slaves do not report obvious intruders, as they would not wish their fate upon others. They may be able to pass on some information about the geography of the valley, but they do not wish to talk for long, fearing discovery. Aiding and abetting intruders is an offense punishable by being thrown into a pit full of rot grubs and left until dead. Slaves are usually found in groups of 2d6.

Slaves: AC 10; MV 12"; HD 1; hp typically 3; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5 (tool); AL Various

Some slaves report intruders to the dwarves immediately. They are either very frightened, or malicious (see preceding paragraph for stats, but there are only 1d2 in each group of these slaves).

All large predators were killed off years ago by the dwarves. The animals the PCs may meet are small wild animals and a few domestic animals gone feral. They usually run away from humanoids.

Troll encounters have a 50% chance of being with Bargot, 25% with Tahar, and 25% with both. They are encountered creeping around under as much cover as possible. They can surprise the PCs 80% of the time, but are unlikely to attack mindlessly (see page 68 for details).

Encounters with dwarves are with individuals or small groups of dwarves (1d6) about their daily business. They are unarmed and unarmed, except perhaps for tools, sticks, and whips (the latter two used for keeping slaves in order).

Dwarves: AC 10; MV 12"; HD 1; hp 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; AL N(E)

Dwarven patrols are constantly on the lookout for runaway slaves and intruders. Typically, a patrol consists of 4d4 2d-level fighters led by a fighter or fighter/thief of a higher level (use stats from one of the leaders in the slaving party on page 65).

Dwarven Patrol: AC 4 (scale mail +1 and shield); MV 9"; HD 2; hp 12 (average); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short swords or spears) or 1d4 (light crossbows); AL N(E)

freeing The Captives

The path takes you toward a village, just a collection of squat stone buildings next to a stream. On the outskirts of the village stands a lone tree. There is something red and vaguely man-shaped hanging from a rope attached to one of its stouter branches.

The body is that of a lay-missionary. The dwarves caught him dropping something. This guessed he was trying to make a trail. They decided to make an example of him, so they flogged him to death.



The lay-missionaries are being held in a locked stone building that stands apart from the other buildings. On the doors the dwarven word for "slaves" is written. They are all chained to the floor. The manacles that secure them are of a superior workmanship (-5% on Open Locks roll, -10% on Bend Bars/Lift Gates to pull chain out of floor). The lay-missionaries have been roughed up a little, but no real harm has been done.

The clerics were taken to the Priests at the Temple in the ruins of the city. One of the lay-missionaries has a smattering of dwarven and heard their captors mention it.

If the PCs decide to investigate the village, they encounter 2d8 ordinary dwarves. If the PCs are seen, an alarm will go out. If the villagers are killed, the alarm be delayed for 2d4 hours. The keys to the manacles and the slave building are kept on the person of the one of the dwarves the PCs meet. Most of the dwarves have various other keys, so it takes the PCs one run to figure out which keys open the slave building and manacles.

If the PCs free the lay-missionaries, the PCs have to get them out of the valley straight away, hide them, or risk almost certain discovery by dwarf patrols. If the PCs are stupid enough to try to rescue the clerics from the city with the lay missionaries in tow, have them all captured by a patrol. The lay missionaries are then returned to the slave building and the PCs are taken to Zhakar to be "questioned" in the Priests' torture chamber.

Trolls' Lair

The PCs will discover the trolls' lair if they do not encounter the trolls elsewhere. It is situated in a cave hidden by deep undergrowth.

The walls of the cave are covered in scratches and primitive daubings. A crude drawing shows terrified stick men being engulfed by a vast shapeless mass. Other pictures show large stick men fighting small stick men. Also depicted are many snakes or worms. Various bones, broken and whole, are scattered on the floor, and these are covered in scratchings too.

Tahar and Bargot sneaked into Zhakar some 12 years ago and set up home in this cave. They live by scavenging and occasionally stealing slaves or livestock. They are cautious and never attack the dwarves openly, preferring to make sneak raids in the night. They are quite keen on killing and eating the PCs, but hesitate if the PCs appear capable of killing them. They can be bribed with food and trinkets; given a suitably large bribe, Tahar might answer a few questions. If Tahar was sufficiently taken by the PCs (*charmed*, perhaps), he might just lead them by a secret way into the Temple of the Worm.

Tahar is unusually bright for a troll. He is responsible for the pictures. One night, he crept through the ruins of Zhakar and down into the Temple of the Worm. What he saw made him very wary of the dwarves. He saw the dwarves worshipping an amorphous blackness. To him it meant one thing: magic. He knows that the dwarves would hunt down and kill Bargot and himself, if they found out about the trolls.

Tahar (incorrectly) believes that the Worm never emerges because the light of the sun will destroy it.

Trolls: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 6+6; hp 30, 24; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/2d6; regeneration; AL CE

Hidden near the back of the cave is the trolls' horde. Most of it is junk, although they have acquired a few emeralds worth 350 stl.

The Ruins of Zhakar

Through the huge cracks in the city walls you see a mess of broken buildings and fallen spires. Even outside the city walls, signs of damage are obvious. Once there must have been extensive underground chambers stretching out from beneath the buildings. Deep hollows testify to their collapse.

Despite the destruction, one building seems to have survived relatively unscathed. Some repair work has been done on it and it looks habitable. It is a large, impressive structure, possibly once an important civic building.

The city is almost deserted; no one but the Priests of the Worm live here now. However, it is kept clean and is not allowed to fall into total disrepair. Patrols come here, checking for intruders and runaway slaves, and there is a watch post to guard a tunnel that leads to the outside world.

There is a 25% chance of meeting a dwarven patrol on the streets, but only a 10% chance inside a deserted building. Check every half hour. This is a standard patrol, with the addition of a 3d-level cleric, armed with *wormbolts* (see this page).

The watch post always has sentries. This entrance is the one that intruders most commonly attempt to use.

The Temple of The Worm

This was once the City Hall, but now it houses the Priests of the Worm and the Worm itself. There are around 50 priests of various levels in residence at the moment, although there are others elsewhere in the valley. All are taught how to use crossbows and how to fire the special wormbolts.

Wormbolts are hollow crossbow bolts that have a hole near the tip. Into the hole is placed a rot grub. The rot grubs are first anesthetized by dipping them in a fungal potion. If a bolt hits and does 4 points of damage, the rot grub is released into the wound (see MM, p. 83).

There is a 1 in 10 chance (check every 10 minutes) that the PCs meet a group of 1d4 1st- to 3d-level Priests when in an unnumbered area (average hp, AC 3, light crossbow, wormbolts, short swords and shields).

1. prison area

The clerical missionaries are held in various cells. This is where the PCs are brought if captured. Every so often, one of them is removed and taken to the torture chamber to be tortured. The whole point of the torture is to get them to confess to worshipping a false god. This is very important to the Priests of the Worm. Other recent captives have talked about



the return of the True Gods. The priests fear that the dwarves will turn away from the great Worm if they hear that the True Gods have returned.

While the PCs are held captive, they will be watched over by the jailor and his eight assistants.

Jailor: AC 2 (Dex bonus, leather apron [AC 9], and *ring of protection* +4); MV 12"; F7; S 18/75, D 17, Cn 18; hp 68; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+3 (club and Str bonus); also has keys to all cells, manacles, etc.

Assistants (8): AC 3 (*chain mail* +1 and shields); MV 9"; F4; hp 22, 24, 31, 35, 26, 20, 29, 21; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short swords or spears)

The jailor likes a good fight; in case of a jailbreak, he will pick out the strongest PC and take him on alone.

If the PCs have been captured, they have an opportunity to escape when the jailor and his cronies get hold of some strong drink and drink themselves into a stupor. That should give inventive PCs an opportunity to get the keys from the jailor.

2. Torture Chamber

The torture chamber is very well equipped. This is not surprising as the Priests of the Worm are accomplished torturers. Apart from the controlled and skillful application of force, they also use pain-inducing fungal draughts as well as threatening to let rot grubs loose on the victim. These worms are attached to thin, almost invisible wires. They can be pulled out before they reach the heart. The effect is most disconcerting. Not surprisingly, most people crumble before it gets to that stage.

3. accommodations

This part of the temple complex is used as a living area. Here are found dormitories for the lesser priests and private rooms for the more senior priests. There is a kitchen here and a communal recreation area, where the priests play various games of skill. The PCs would soon be

overpowered if they entered this area.

4. Library

This is obviously a library. Rows of shelves house scrolls and books in varying states of repair. Tiny booklice seem to be everywhere. Their clicking can be heard as well as the scratching of pens and the occasional cough.

Bookcases line the walls and outside of the room. It is possible to creep around here without being discovered, as long as silence is maintained. Note that the center of the library is completely open.

Here some of the priests busy themselves copying various scrolls and books. The originals date from before the Cataclysm. They are copied as an act of remembrance of dwarves who perished in the Cataclysm. A chronicle has been kept since the Priesthood was formed. Interestingly, it contains very little useful material on the Worm, except that "it abhors and shuns the light, being a creature from the realms of eternal darkness. It knows what lies in the hearts and minds of all those who are before it."

5. Secure Storeroom

This is a repository for several magical items that have been taken from captives over the years. The dwarves either cannot use them, or do not as yet know how to use them. This is where any magical items taken from the PCs are placed. There is a scroll of the magic-user spell wall of stone. There are several staves and rods here. One is a *wand of lightning* (79 charges, but activation command unknown). The rest are just sticks with minor enchantments cast upon them.

The heavy iron door is locked. It is very difficult to open without the key, which is kept by Garath Daerohelm (see page 70).

6. Maggot farm

Here the Priests keep rot grubs in large stone vats. They are fed on a mixture of rotting vegetable matter and animal waste. Occasionally a slave is made an example of and publicly fed to them.

7. Catacomb

A heavy door bars entry to this place. It will be difficult to open as it is rarely used.

A wide corridor stretches off into the darkness. There appear to be alcoves cut into the walls. In the nearest alcove you see a jumble of bone and grey cloth.

The floor is covered in a layer of dust, in which a number of footprints can be seen. Some, the bootprints of dwarves, have been half filled in; others, those of rats, are fresh.

This area has served as a catacomb for the Priests of the Worm. The bodies of three of the most evil Priests have become animated. They attack any non-evil characters who enter. Treat these as sons of Kyuss, but those killed by their worms do not become sons.

Sons of Kyuss (3): AC 10; MV 9" ; HD 4; hp 12, 19, 21; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA fear, worms, disease; regeneration; AL CE; FE p. 83.

8. Chapel

This chamber is normally used for services and rituals, by the look of things. A large golden effigy of a worm stands in the center of the chamber, which is dominated by a huge pair of brass doors. The walls of this chamber were once richly decorated, but at some point in time they were white-washed.

Two dwarves stand near a stone altar. On the altar is something small and bloody.

The two most senior priests are performing an augury, examining the entrails of a dead chicken.

They do not attack unless they are attacked. They have supreme confidence in the Worm's ability to deal with intruders. They do all they can to get the PCs to enter the Great Hall; once the PCs are in, the priests close the doors on them.

The golden effigy of the worm is stud-



ded with gems and is worth 40,000 stl. However, it is almost impossible to move as it weighs nearly a ton.

NPC Capsule

Cherison Narlhemmer

AC 1 (*splint mail* +3); MV 12"; CI 11; hp 57; S 15, I 12, W 17, D 10, Cn 16, Ch 17; #AT 1; Dmg *as rod of smiting* (76 charges). *short sword* +2, or *wormbolts* from a *Crossbow of accuracy*; AL NE

Cherison is excessively hairy, even for a dwarf; black wiry hairs seem to sprout from every visible portion of his skin. He wears a ceremonial costume, dark robes and dull blackened metal beneath. His face, at least the bits visible through the hair, is twisted into a permanent scowl. His eyes seem almost to glow, such is the intensity of his stare. He appears to be insane.

The wildness of his looks are matched by his wild behavior. He speaks loudly and quickly, and with great power. He has an acid tongue and is rude and abusive. He considers non-dwarves inferior and he makes it known.

He appears to be mad but in a very charismatic way. He is the spiritual leader of his people, who consider him touched by their god.

NPC Capsule

Garath Daerohelm

AC 0 (*splint mail* +2 and *shield* +1); MV 12"; C9: hp 42; S 10, I 17, W 16, D 14, Cn 9, Ch 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+2 (*lucern hammer* +2); wears *vampiric ring of regeneration* and *ring of magic detection* (as per spell, six times daily), has an *eversmoking bottle*; AL NE

He is dressed in a similar manner to Narlhemmer, but he does not appear to be insane. His brown beard is neat and controlled, his face is almost vacant.

His manner is also different. His mind is ordered and sharp as a razor. He speaks slowly and quietly with perfect pronunciation. He is polite, almost reserved. He speaks many languages fluently; he took the time to learn them from captives. He has a very good idea of what is going on in the outside world. He fears that outsiders

will bring in knowledge that will rob the priests of their power. Already rumors are circulating among the dwarves about the True Gods. Outsiders must be questioned, learned from, and then killed.

If a combat starts to go against him, he will undo his *eversmoking* bottle and try to escape through the smoke.

9. The great hall

You stand on the steps of what was once a huge and magnificent hall. The walls and floor are now cracked. It is difficult to see very far, as the hall seems filled with an impenetrable darkness.

The Worm resides in what was originally the Great Hall of Zhakar, a magnificent and huge underground chamber used for important civic events and functions. It could hold nearly the entire population of the city in its day. Only senior Priests and sacrifices ever enter the chamber. Entry by others is strictly forbidden, on pain of being sacrificed to the Worm.

If the PCs are thrown in here unarmed, they might just find a few weapons left by victims of the Worm.

The Great Worm: AC 0 (-4); MV 6" @1"; HD 16+; hp 180; #AT 1 per attacker (max 15); Dmg 4d4/attack; SD Dark cloud; spell immunity; MR 75%; AL N

The Great Worm is large, about 200 feet long and five feet in diameter. Its skin is covered in a thick and sticky slime. It cannot be seen, as it is surrounded permanently by a dark cloud, slightly longer than the Worm, 15 feet high and 30 feet across. No light can penetrate the darkness, magical or not. This gives the worm an effective AC of -4 against attackers, even those with infra- and ultra-vision (PCs with blind-fighting proficiency only have a -2 penalty in the cloud and thus the Worm's AC is -2 against these characters). Ordinary and temporary magical lights are permanently extinguished, although permanent magical lights function again once outside of the Worm's darkness. Also, all those who enter the

cloud must roll a saving throw vs. spell. Any who fail lose 4 points of Strength while within the cloud.

The Worm once lived in the hot darkness far below the surface of Krynn. When the Cataclysm shattered the planet, cracks created enabled the Worm to venture far above its usual habitat. One of these cracks led the Worm to the Great Hall beneath the city of Zhakar, where the First Priest found it and began worshipping it.

Coming from deep within Krynn, the Worm is used to extreme pressure and heat. It receives no damage from ordinary fires, or even from magical fires if it makes its save. It suffers only half damage from magical fires if it fails its saving. Crushing and bashing weapons inflict only half damage. The Worm also regenerates 3 hit points per round. Acid has no effect upon it.

The Worm can be destroyed with a *wish* or *limited wish*, if reduced to below 0 hit points, by wishing that the Worm is no longer able to regenerate.

The Worm feeds by wrapping coils of its body around its victims and squeezing them to a pulp. If a 19 or 20 is rolled, it has managed to wrap itself around its victims (it can squeeze up to three victims per round). Unless they escape by making a successful *bend bars* roll or are freed by someone else doing the same, victims suffer 16 points of damage per round, with no attack roll required. The victims can attempt to escape each round until they are dead.

The Worm is unintelligent, but it is psychically sensitive to the thoughts and emotions of those near it. It doesn't think, it merely reacts. If it detects hostile thoughts, it attacks. It also seeks to extinguish light sources that suddenly appear in its vicinity, although it moves away from large light sources.

The Worm is immune to all mind-influencing spells and mental attacks. These are reflected straight back at the caster, with no loss of power.

It can burrow through soft rock, but not through the hard rock of the Khalkist Mountains.

Dealing with the Worm is not easy. An inventive way to defeat it is to lead it back

into the crack through which it originally came. This can be done by having someone with a powerful light source lead it down there. Then the way back could be barred with many *continual light* spells (the Worm would mistake these for daylight) and a physical barrier, such as *wall of stone*.

Luring the Worm down the crack is a job for a hero. Low-level characters aren't cut out for it. They might trip and be killed by the Worm. Unfortunately, unless the hero can *teleport* or otherwise magically escape, he cannot return (a fact that may not occur to the hapless hero until it is too late).

Conclusion

If The Priests Remain

As long as either Narlhemmer or Daerohelm is alive, the dwarves have an effective leadership and the PCs will experience great difficulty leaving the valley. All ways will be watched and patrols will be doubled in regularity and strength. The patrols will be supplied with poison-coated bolts (-4 penalty to saving throw, 5 points of damage if save made, death if failed) and they will be escorted by a cleric with wormbolts. Almost everything will be done to stop the PCs from reaching the outside world and spreading the word of Zhakar's existence.

If the PCs manage to escape from the valley and reach civilization, the dwarves will change tactics and try to have the PCs assassinated.

If The Worm Remains and The Priests are gone

If Daerohelm, Narlhemmer, and a good many other priests are killed, the Priesthood will collapse and the Temple will be abandoned. Without sacrifices, the Worm will grow hungry. It will leave the Temple of the Worm by night and head for nearby abandoned mines.

Months later, underground areas of Sanction will be attacked. This marks the beginning of what will be frequent attacks on cities and towns in central Ansalon. No doubt someone will eventually deal with the Worm, but the PCs will have the deaths of thousands on their consciences.

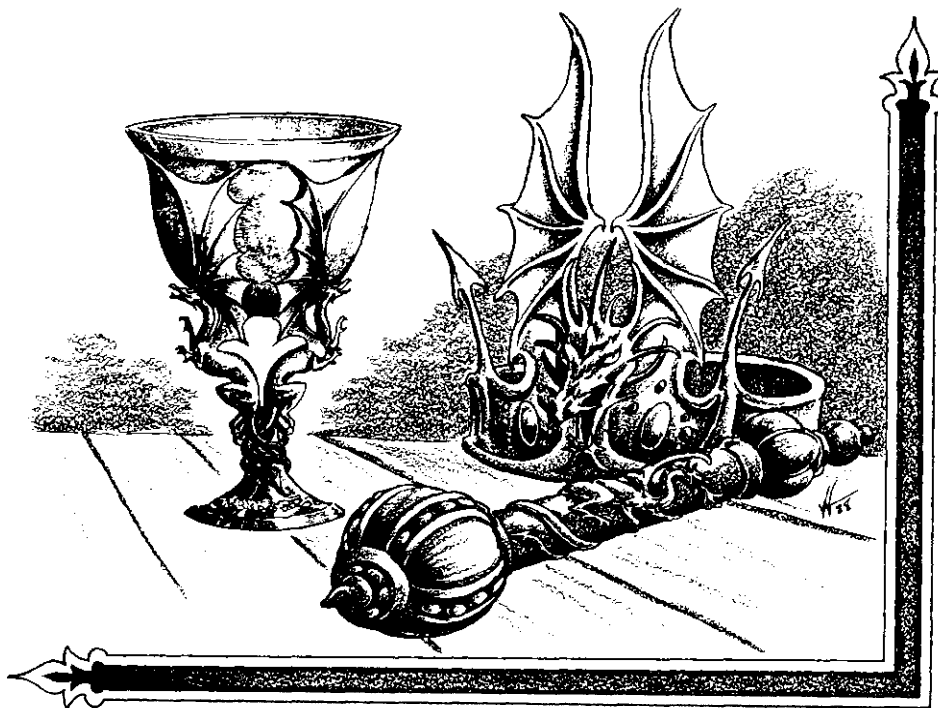
If Neither The Worm nor The Priests Remain

Without the Worm, the dwarves have no purpose in life. Without the Priests, they have no leadership. Left to their own devices, they will revert to their old ways and given time they will no doubt fade away.

The dwarves are not evil, and they would embrace the worship of Reorx, if convinced of his return, as enthusiastically

ly as they took to worshipping the Great Worm. They will not give up their slaves easily, however. Without slaves, many skilled craftsmen would be forced to give up their trades and labor in the fields or in the mines.

Zhakar could be returned to something near the state it was in before the Cataclysm, with a great deal of work. The city will never be as beautiful as it once was, but it could be made habitable. Many of the abandoned mines could be reopened. Ground that has lain fallow for years could be cultivated. All this would require more manpower than there is in Zhakar, even including the slaves. It would in their best interests if the dwarves of Zhakar opened their gates to any of their brothers who wished to settle there.





The Silvanesti—a Second Chance



DM's Information

This adventure is set after the year 352 AC. The War of the Lance is over, and the people of Ansalon are trying to rebuild their shattered lands.

Suggested PC levels are 10 and above. Between six and eight PCs can participate, with more requiring a proportional increase in monster power. Though it would be ideal to include at least one Solamnic Knight and one elf, these are not necessary for the success of the adventure. PCs of evil alignment are not allowed.

Players should be warned that this adventure will require skilled role playing and problem solving. Not every encounter can be resolved by violence. Common knowledge of Krynn is a must.

Dungeon Masters should have the hardbound book *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures*, especially for the map of post-war Ansalon. Actually, any map of post-war Ansalon can be used. The *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* and the *Wilderness Survival Guide* are recommended but not mandatory.

The Start

The PCs start off in the city of Palanthus. They have been charged by the council to undertake a dangerous errand.

Though Takhisis and her forces were defeated a year ago in the War of the Lance, the forces of evil were not completely wiped out. Thanks to the war, dragons are now part of Krynn again.

In the past, the Second Dragon War spelled doom for dragonkind. Because of heroes such as Huma, the dragons became but a bad memory on Krynn. Soon afterward the magic arts of dragon-controlling potions and dragon-slaying arrows and swords fell into disuse, no longer needed. Instead, weaponers and wizards focused on other important things that demanded their attention.

With the dragons' return, the need for magical items to fight them also returned. The *dragonlances* were found, which is all well and good, but there is a great need for weapons that have less elaborate conditions for creation.

Besides, not everyone has the skill to wield a lance. Swords and bows are far more common weapons.

The one race that has vast insights on fabricating arrows, swords, and potions is the Silvanesti. The council of Palanthus wants the party to journey to Qualinost, approach the exiled Silvanesti and ask for the secrets, or at least begin negotiations for them.

In return, the council will give each PC a parcel of land, a title, and other political favors. These rewards will make the PC a titled lord and landowner with political influence in the kingdom. A further reward of 4,000 steel pieces will be made to each PC as additional incentive, but only if they seem unsatisfied with the initial offer!

Any Solamnic Knight of the Order of the Crown who participates in this quest can qualify for the Order of the Sword. The adventure is certainly sufficient for admittance, provided another PC is a witness.

A boat is being made ready, the *Sormdodger*. It is a four-masted sailing vessel, 120 feet long with a hearty crew of 60 sailors and captained by an honest man. The boat will be ready to cast off in two days.

The party may stay free in a tavern in Palanthus for up to four days. During this time, the party may outfit themselves as they see fit.

Wolves in the fold

Palanthus is infested with draconian spies, and several have even managed to infiltrate Lord Amothus Palanthus's ruling council.

An Aurak and a Sivak from the Red Dragonarmy have assumed human form and taken seats on the council. During the first night, the party is attacked by these two plus two more Sivaks and six Bozaks. Their intent is to halt this mission before it even starts. Already, a seventh Bozak has been sent on ahead to warn dragons and draconians alike about the new threat.

"Baron Kalathas" (Aurak): AC 0; MV 15"; HD 8; hp 54; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d8+2 (x2) or spell; THAC0 12; SA

spells & breath; SD save at +4; MR 30%; AL LE

Kalanthas insinuated himself into Palanthus politics four years ago. He has built himself up as a reputable noble. He always carries a *ring of regeneration* and a *scarab of protection*.

"Sir Maelarien" (Sivak): AC 1; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 6; hp 40; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d6; THAC0 13; SD +2 on saves; MR 20%; AL NE

Maelarien slew a Solamnic Knight of the Sword six months ago and assumed his identity. The other two Sivaks are in the forms of his squires, and have the same stats.

Bozaks (6): AC 2; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 4; hp 20; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 or by weapon; THAC0 15; SA spells; SD +2 on saves; MR 20%; AL LE. These Bozaks move about using their invisibility-

The attack occurs in the pre-dawn hours at the tavern where the party stays. Since all the council knows where the party is staying, it is easy for Kalathas to lead the raid. The implications of this attack should be obvious to the PCs, and extreme caution in future encounters must be exercised.

getting There

The sea voyage takes two weeks, sailing down between the west coast of Solamnia and the east coast of Ergoth. The party has four guest cabins at their disposal.

The captain is Abrug Polrain, a retired warrior. He is not your typical captain ("Aaar, ye swabs!"), but rather is soft-spoken and stern, commanding instant respect from the crew.

Polrain: AC 10; MV 12"; F7; hp 50; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8/1d8; THAC0 14; AL LG

Polrain is a retired warrior who wields a mean cutlass. Out of his 60 years of life, 40 have been at sea.

Outside help

Takhisis has been made aware of the party's plans, thanks to the spies. Her effort to stop them consists of a kraken that she has imported from another dimension. It attacks when the vessel rounds Ansalon's northwestern coast and proceed south towards Northern Ergoth.

Kraken: AC 5/0; MV //3"(21"); HD 20; hp 120; #AT 2 and 4-6 and 1; Dmg 2d6 (x2), 2d4 (x4-6), 5d4; THAC0 7; SA drag down ships, constriction; SD spell use, sepia ink cloud; AL NE. The kraken will attempt to slow the ship then drag it down.

The vessel has two ballista mounts that can fire every other turn. The crew can man these, each one requiring six men. Thirty-eight other crewmen are busily engaged in keeping the ship moving and afloat. The remaining ten try to fend off the kraken's attacks.

Crewmen: AC 10; MV 1"; HD 2; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8/1d8; THAC0 20; AL NG

More Treachery By Night

The night after the kraken attacks, one crewman sneaks into one of the PC cabins and attempts to assassinate the occupants.

The "crewman" is a Sivak who slew a sailor and took his form before the ship set sail.

Sivak: AC 0; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 6; hp 40; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4+3/1d4+3; SA daggers of venom; SD +2 on all saves; MR 20%; AL NE. This Sivak wears a +1 *ring of protection* and carries two *daggers of venom*. The poison causes paralysis for 3d4 turns if the save is failed. If the PC saves successfully, he is just slowed for 2d4 rounds. The Sivak's plan is to paralyze the victims then toss them overboard.

Dragons ahoy!

This encounter occurs after the ship passes Caergoth and turns eastward toward New Sea. Two blue dragons attempt to catch and destroy the ship.

Gahaar and Fohbohce (Blue Dragons): AC 2; MY 9"/24"; HD 10; hp 50; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/3d8; THAC0 10; SA lightning breath; AL LE.

These two dragons were sent specifically to stop the party. The blue dragons were warned by the seventh Bozak who left Palanthus. These dragons neither negotiate nor parley. If somehow that seventh Bozak was prevented from leaving the city, this attack does not happen.

a Careful Reception

The ship anchors off the east coast of Qualinesti approximately 25 miles east of Qualinost. There is no real harbor here, but the party can see ten figures moving about in the trees 80 yards from the shore.

The reception group the party encounters is comprised of nine Silvanesti elven warriors led by Oranthus Silversky. They do not have horses. Consult the *Player's Handbook* for elven special abilities.

Oranthus: AC -4; MV 12"; F10; hp 87; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8/1d12 (+4); THAC0 12; AL CG.

Oranthus is a Silvanesti warrior who distrusts all non-elves. He is grim—the horror of seeing his land devastated has taken a toll on him. Despite all this, he is an honest, loyal, brave elf who cares for nature and life.

He is never without his +4 *long sword*, *elfin cloak*, *wand of enemy detection*, +4 *chain mail*, and +2 *shield*. His Dexterity is 16.

Elf Patrol (9): AC 5; MV 12"; F6; hp 48; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d6; THAC0 16; AL CG. These elves carry long swords and long bows. They are totally loyal to Oranthus.

If there are no hostilities and the party can somehow convince Oranthus of their good intentions, he will take them to Queen Alhana. She has other as-yet-unnamed guests, which Oranthus hints at. He draws his sword, holds it high, and speaks in rapid Silvanesti. In a blinding flash, Oranthus and the party disappear and reappear in the pavilion.

a Mutually Beneficial Bargain

The pavilion is part of The Tower of Suns, where Queen Alhana lives with her husband Porthios, Speaker of the Suns for the Qualinesti. Oranthus leaves the party in a visitor's alcove while he arranges the meeting.

An hour later, the meeting takes place. The elves are taking this meeting very seriously, acting as formal and polite as possible. There is a serious lack of warmth and good cheer in their manners. Queen Alhana is in attendance, as well as 20 7th-level guards, an old man in a tattered robe and floppy, wide-brimmed, hat, and a younger man with a scar running down the right side of his face.

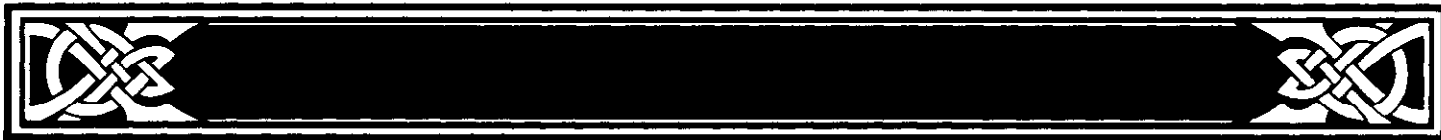
Alhana greets the party coldly and introduces the old man as Fizban the Fabulous and the other as Waylorn Wyvernabane. She bluntly asks the party what their business is.

As the party explains their mission, observant PCs notice Fizban muttering to himself and making vague gestures with his hands. Waylorn merely listens to the party with great interest. When the explanation is done, Alhana speaks.

"So, the human kingdoms want our secrets of forging dragon-slaying weapons? This comes as no surprise. The more we give to humankind, the more still they want. Apparently the elven blood shed during the War of the Lance was not enough for the insatiable humans.

"It is most interesting that when my father Lorac asked for the dragon orb at the council of Whitestone, he was refused, but now that we have something that the humans lack, they are not ashamed to beg..."

Her speech is cut off by Fizban, who has gradually sidled over to her and finally leaned close enough to whisper in



her ear. He whispers for several minutes, then ambles back to his old spot, staring at his thumbnail and mumbling arcane phrases at it. Alhana resumes her speech.

"It has been brought to my attention that the knowledge you seek was a joint effort of dwarves, humans, and elves. It is by fortuitous chance that the only remaining copies of the knowledge reside amongst my people. You are free to go to the Hall of Ancient Thoughts and fetch the tomes."

Her expression changes to a mirthless smile as she gestures to her right. "You will find the Hall to the right of this tower. There are scores of thousands of books, scrolls, and tomes. We cannot help you look for them. May the gods give you luck in finding exactly what you wish. You shall need much of it.

"If and when you find it, we shall discuss terms and bargains. You are dismissed. My guests and I have far graver matters to discuss, such as the healing of my homeland."

The party is escorted out and is now on their own. They have free admittance to the Hall. Searching for the material is difficult. The PCs must roll their Intelligences or less on percentile dice. Each PC may attempt this once per eight hours.

When the information is eventually found, it turns out to be a disappointment. All it contains are directions to a tomb of an elven wizard who devised many of the weapon spells. The scrolls have been buried with him.

Fortunately, there is good news. In the very same book is a long-forgotten legend in rhyme that deals with restoring corrupted nature to its wholesome state. Let the PCs come to their own conclusion, but this is an excellent bargaining chip!

When the PCs are ready, Alhana sees them again in her court. All of the same people are there. If the party presents their findings, Alhana's cold expression momentarily warms. Waylorn, being a druid, appears fascinated. Only Fiz ban appears unfazed, instead smiling innocently and looking at the ceiling, trying to remember a spell. Alhana finally speaks.

"This news may, I say again, may be a hope we have sought. This would indeed

be an equitable trade. Let us hear the rhyme."

The rhyme is as follows:

In the throes of Chaos,
Nature writhes in pain.
Heed now these words,
To heal the earth again.
Seek the regent road,
Toward the rising sun.
Go bravely to the homeland,
For healing to be done.
And amid green towers,
Shalost then be found.
Face the lords of doom,
They run, leap, and bound.
Find the stone ring and halt,
Watched by three in
Sanction High.
And Nature's head by Queen
o'erlook
Then touch her eyes, to cry.

The poem is shrouded in obscurity, but can still be figured out. The party must travel the King's Road eastward into Silvanesti. Once they reach Shalost, they must proceed northwest toward the Lords of Doom. Eventually they reach a ring of statues of various gods of Krynn. At a given night, when all three moons are in High Sanction and the constellation of the Queen of Darkness appears to rise over the head of the statue of Chislew, the eyes of the statue must be touched. This will help to bring about the promised healing.

None of the NPCs knows the meaning of the rhyme. This is the first they have heard of it. The players must figure it out themselves. The ruins of Shalost are exactly 500 miles away. Getting there requires three weeks of overland travel, doing about 25 miles a day. The next time all three moons are in High Sanction together is in four weeks.

The deal Alhana proposes is this: seek out the miracle healing, use it, and all obligations are satisfied for now. The party may then journey to this tomb and retrieve the secrets of the weapons. The tomb is located 20 miles northeast of the King's Road as it turns southeast toward Silvanost.

No personnel can be spared to help.

The elves have enough problems of their own to keep them occupied for quite a while. The party is put up in an elven tavern, though they must pay their own way.

The Journey

The overland encounters on the way to Silvanesti are to be augmented by the following: two attacks by pairs of huge adult white dragons, one attack by a pair of huge adult blue dragons, and three attacks by pairs of huge adult green dragons. This reflects the dragons' awareness of the Party's plans and the ensuing efforts to stop them. None of these attackers can be reasoned with. These attacks are evenly spaced, occurring as the party nears each respective faction's territory. Remember that these attacks occur in addition to normal random monster encounters.

As with the earlier attack on the ship, these encounters do not happen if that seventh Bozak was prevented from leaving Palanthus.

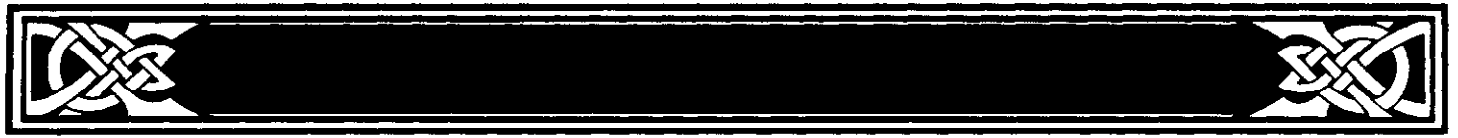
entry into Nightmare

The King's Road runs straight into the twisted elven land. A pair of carved stone columns mark the exact border. Someone has nailed a dead raccoon to the left post. It is deformed, with two heads and three legs.

The trees are bleeding blood, and the very ground feels spongy one minute and brittle the next. The songs of the birds have been stilled, to be replaced by obscene croaking and rasping whose source is better left unknown.

Patches of green fog roll over the twisted land and these have gained in virulence. If anyone wanders through one unprotected, treat it as if he had been breathed upon by a 35-hp green dragon. The clouds have a 6" movement rate, randomly changing direction every turn. There is a 25% chance of running into one each half hour.

Distances have little meaning in this ever shifting nightmare. Proportions are skewed; anything encountered here is actually 1d100 feet closer or farther away (50-50 chance) than it appears. Archers



with bow specialization do not gain point blank bonuses.

Spells function normally with the exception of any spells involving nature. The spell commune with nature forces the caster to make a save at -3 vs. death magic or go insane for 1d12 months. Any "speak with" spells produce endless chaotic babble. Growth or summonings produce deformed horrors, utterly uncontrollable and useless. Weather spells of any sort have no effect.

ENCOUNTER WITH MADNESS

As the party proceeds down the road, which seems to maintain its form despite the shifting chaos around it, they hear a chorus of moans and a rustling of misshapen grass.

Suddenly, 20 small rabbits with human faces approach the party. They plead with the group to restore them and their lands to normal. The babble includes high-pitched shrieks, ragged croaks, and pathetic, painful moans.

All who hear must make a saving throw at -1 (-2 if an elf or druid) vs. spell or be affected as if a *symbol of hopelessness* has been cast. After a few minutes of such pleading, the rabbits mournfully move on.

a Bad Side effect

The problem with 20 rabbits screaming in human voices is that it tends to attract attention. In this case, a very hungry giant slug.

Giant Slug: AC 8; MV 6"; HD 12; hp 80; #AT 1; Dmg 1d12; THACO 9; SA acid spit; AL N

Resourceful PCs can trace the slug's trail back to where it came from. The lucky party will find a colony of six more giant slugs with the same stats as the first one, a mere half mile south of their path. There is no treasure here.

The Cry of Death

As the party continues down the road, they hear a female moaning in pain, off the road to the north. In a small clearing

120 feet to the north lies an elven skeleton clad in chain mail, clutching a pitted silver statue of Takhisis.

From the opposite side of the clearing comes a banshee, who screams her death wail.

Banshee: AC 0; MV 15"; HD 7; hp 56; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THACO 13; SA death wail; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; MR 50%; AL CE

The banshee is the ghost of the evil female elf warrior lying on the ground, worshipping Takhisis to the very end. She has a *flametongue long sword*, *elfen boors*, 45 steel pieces, and five emeralds valued at 250 gp each. In order to get to this stuff, the skeleton must be turned over, revealing a colony of yellow mold that grew in the shade of the corpse.

Yellow Mold: AC 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA poison spore cloud; SD affected only by fire; AL N

The statue of Takhisis is worth 100 stl and is cursed. Whoever possesses it cannot get rid of it unless a *remove curse* is cast by an 11th-level cleric.

The statue drains Strength, Dexterity and Constitution, each at the rate of one point a day. When an attribute reaches zero, the victim dies.

Impending Juggernaut

As the party continues down the road, they begin to hear a dull rumble. It gets closer and closer, but its exact origin is unknown.

Suddenly, the trees to the right of the party part, revealing a massive wooden structure on leather treads. A sharp plow blade is mounted on the front. The thing is belching steam and making a horrendous clanking noise. Wicked-looking scythes cut down diseased trees. A huge pile driver beats the ground at irregular intervals.

The thing approaches the party, not slowing down until it gets within six feet of them, then stops on a dime, causing a small humanoid figure to come flying out of the device.

Propelled by inertia, the figure arcs gracefully over the party's heads and lands with a dull thud, shattering the glass bowl it was wearing over its head. Several other small figures wearing glass bowls emerge from the machine. As may be guessed, they are gnomes.

The flying gnome has since recovered, and is scribbling furiously in a notebook. If approached, he simply looks up and smiles at the PCs.

"Greetingsstrangerswellmetandallthat. Thatwassomestopehwhat?Ibelieveithasin spiredmetodesignabettergnomeflinger dontyouthinkso?"

If the party somehow manages to calm the gnome down, he'll introduce himself as "MyparentsloveSanctristothey..." this can go on forever, but the gnome will reluctantly admit that humans shorten his name to "Mypar."

The glass bowl on the gnomes' heads are breathing apparatuses. They do not want to breathe the fouled air of Silvanesti. The problem is that these things do not work, since all they consist of are glass globes with a hole so a gnome's head can fit in it.

If asked what he and his companions are doing, Mypar tells the PCs that some Qualinesti elves hired him and his staff to take their Weird Weed Whacker and clean out the foul vegetation. Mypar's words run together and he also blurts out that they were instructed to run over any human parties they may find. He'll catch himself after this, look at the party suspiciously, then zip back to his device, yelling for his crew to power the thing back up. In two rounds, the device is ready and begins rolling forward.

Weird Weed Whacker: Size 12; AC -1; MV Horiz 48'; Sound Deafening; Alter Object Broken Ground and Cut Trees; Overall Complexity 13

This monstrous, steam-powered, self-propelled device is the gnomes' attempt at agriculture. It plows up the ground, beats it with a pile driver and hacks down sick trees (well, all trees, actually!). If any PC gets within four feet of the thing, he is attacked as if by a 20-HD monster. There



are six scythes and each can hit a different target, inflicting 3d10 points of damage. The pile driver can hit one PC, causing 10d10 of damage, all items save vs. crushing blow.

The only reason this thing is allowed to have such impressive combat stats is that no one in their right mind should get so close to such a dubious invention. Any who do get what they deserve.

This can get ugly. The gnomes unknowingly met several Auraks, Sivaks, and Baaz all disguised one way or another as Qualinesti elves. This group was sent to intercept the party. If the party can somehow show the gnomes that they are on the side of good, the gnomes, incensed at being tricked, will give the party a lift to where the "elves" are.

a Dubious Honor and a Confrontation

The ride in the Weed Whacker is at best a unique experience. Inside are eight gnomes, all babbling rapidfire, trying to be heard over the deafening roar of the machine. It is 108 degrees in there, and stinks of gnome sweat. Bear in mind the chance for gnome mishap. Fortunately the ride takes only an hour.

The Whacker comes upon a small campsite, a haven in the wooded chaos around them. This is located due south of the road. Here are the ten alleged Qualinesti. In reality there are two Auraks, three Sivaks and five Baaz. Use the stats on page 72 for the Auraks and Sivaks. The Sivaks are armed with their wicked swords, enchanted to +3 potency.

Baaz: AC2; MV6"/(15")/18"; HD2; hp 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 16; MR 20%; AL LE. They are armed with long swords.

If somehow magically coerced into talking, the Auraks can tell the party that they were sent after them especially. In fact, Takhisis herself probably knows about the party's mission. Between the ten of them, there are 2,000 steel pieces locked in a chest, the majority belonging to the Auraks. This can be found if the party digs under the fire pit.

The gnomes apologize to the party and offer to take them back to the road. Only the bravest (and stupidest) parties will accept the ride.

The Statue Ring

If the PCs follow the rest of the directions properly, they hear a rumbling coming from a clearing up ahead. If they make no noise, they can move up to the remaining few trees and gaze at a green dragon, sitting proudly in the circle of statues. If they made noise, the dragon has already taken wing and will circle around and attack the party from behind. In that case, the party sees a ring of statues with a large pile of coins, jewels, and interesting items in the middle of the circle.

Klorrin (Green Dragon): AC 2; MV 9"/24"; HD 9; hp 63; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d10; THAC0 12; SA chlorine breath; AL LE

Klorrin is a very old dragon who remembers the awakening over 60 years ago. She is a sinister dragon, very smart and not gullible. She chose this spot out of spite for the good and neutral gods portrayed in stone in this circle. Her treasure includes 3,000 stl., 2,200 sp, 23 gems of various types and cuts (worth 1d10 x 100 gp each), a +2 longbow, +3 hammer, +2 spear, two-handed frostbrand, Bucknard's purse, lyre of building, and a potion of plant control.

The ring consists of 12 statues in an area 120 feet in diameter. The statues are of Paladine, Kiri-Jolith, Mishakal, Habbakuk, Branchala, Solinari, Gilean, Sirrion, Reorx, Chislev, Zivilyn, and Lunitari.

The Rhyme Obeyed

The stars come out two hours after sundown. The constellation of Takhisis rises above the head of Chislev one half hour after the stars come out. The three moons are in the sky in High Sanction shortly afterward. If the eyes of the statue are pressed, they click, then bounce back.

Nothing happens for one turn. Then, tears begin flowing out of Chislev's eyes.

This continues for one turn, increasing in volume. At the end of one turn, clouds gather in the sky. Three turns after the clouds gather, they open up and pour a cleansing, driving rain on the nation of Silvanesti.

This magical rain begins to work in different ways. First, all the fauna in the land begin a slow reversing process back to normal, taking about one week to complete.

Secondly, the flora ceases bleeding. The very far gone plants die quickly, the less perverted ones straighten out very subtly. It still is going to take a lot of work on the elves' part to restore this area, but now, instead of decades, it will take several years. The area still feels a bit odd, and well it should, but amidst all the twisted despair there now shines a small beacon of hope, growing stronger each year.

Thirdly, the green fog is forever gone, washed away by the purifying rains.

The rain falls for four hours then ceases, the clouds rapidly breaking up. The restrictions on nature-related spells are now lifted. The party's next goal is to get to the tomb and find those manuscripts.

Should the party somehow miss the first night of High Sanction, there will be one more the following night. If they miss that one too, they have a wait of 108 days for the next triple High Sanction.

The Swamp: a Stupid Prelude

Just before the PCs approach the swampy area, they come across a series of eight mud-and-wood huts. A large sign scrawled in the common tongue reads:

"Mistereee Swomp. Kum one, kum two! See the wundas uv the swomp! Onlee wun gold peese eatch!"

This is a gully dwarf settlement, population "many" (35, actually). They are fascinated with the swamp and settled down as close as possible without coming in contact with the acid clouds that billow forth from it.

If asked for information, they refer the party to the chief, called Nimno Mudlord. Nimno fancies himself a cunning ruler, and he tries to take advantage



of the party by charging them lots of money for the smallest bit of information. At heart he is a coward and will be overcome by a party that stands its ground.

Nimno Mudlord: AC 10; MV 12"; F4; hp 28; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4/1d3; THAC0 18; SD groveling; AL CN

Nimno carries a club called Drag-onkonker. He has also taken the art of groveling to new heights of grandeur.

The only general information to be obtained is that there are dragons in the swamp. If asked how many, Nimno will show four fingers and say "Two." Any other information must be asked in very exact terms. The answer to all of these questions will be "yes," followed by "many."

All the citizens should be considered basic 1-HD gully dwarves. They flee at the sight of an unsheathed sword. They have no treasure. The admission sign is a very recent addition, erected because of the heavy traffic going into the swamp these past few weeks.

The Swamp

The tomb is located in a portion of Silvanesti that, on the maps, appears to be forest. Through the years, however, it has degenerated into swampland. The rains have brought healing, but swamps need to be drained, and this swamp is definitely still here and flourishing.

The affected area is over 20 miles in diameter, bordered by the river that empties into the sea near the Towers of Eli. Movement through this area is at three miles an hour. Swamp encounters should be checked hourly. Despite the rains, a caustic fog hangs in the air, limiting visibility to 60 feet and causing 2 points of damage to each PC every hour. All items must save vs. acid once every four hours.

Swamp Encounters

Check hourly using 1d20. A 1-5 means an encounter occurs. Roll a second d20 to determine the type of encounter.

1: A kender, of all things, named Dweebok Puddlejumper. He wished to see the husband and wife black dragons that dwell near a dark tomb. Naturally he'll join the party.

Dweebok: AC 4; MV 18"; Th7; hp 34; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 or 1d6+2; THAC0 19; AL CN

Dweebok carries the ubiquitous hoopak favored by his race. It is a combination bullet sling and +2 jo stick. He also wears *bracers* AC 6 which he found on a sleeping Black Robe wizard, and a *ring of feather fall*. He has a 16 Dexterity. His purse contains 24 steel and the usual kender stuff.

2-5: Thneezzarpf, a beholder. This vicious beast will attempt to extort money from passersby. He currently has no treasure, a situation he is trying to rectify.

Thneezzarpf: AC 0/2/7; MV 3"; HD 15; hp 75; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; THAC0 8; SA magic eyes; SD anti-magic ray; AL LE

6-8: Banshee. See the stats for the earlier banshee encounter on page 75.

9-11: One of the black dragons on patrol. See stats following.

12-14: A mutated dryad. She still looks as lovely as ever, but now she will maliciously use her charms to imprison a male PC. Use the monster chart in the *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* hard-back book for stats.

15-16: 3d4 ghastrs. Use the monster chart in the *DRAGONLANCE®* hard-back book for stats.

17-19: A patrol of 14 Sivaks, out looking for the party. They try to capture the PCs in order to take them to their homeland. If the party is too tough, the Sivaks go for kills. Use the stats from the earlier Sivak encounters.

20: Both black dragons plus six Sivaks.

With friends Like These...

After sloshing through the mire for a while, the party hears the sounds of a melee coming from up ahead. Reaching the battle area, they see a group of 12 Silvanesti in melee against 18 misshapen elves and three misshapen unicorns.

The latter are long-time denizens of this nightmare land, their bodies and souls twisted into the same horror as the nature around them. The Silvanesti are not killing them, rather they are causing non-fatal damage. Their goal is to knock their opponents out, then try to find a way to help them return to normal. Unless the PCs specifically ask, they do not notice these particular efforts. The twisted mob is fighting for keeps, however.

The combat looks like it could go either way. Four of the Silvanesti appear wounded. If the PCs rush in and start hacking at the corrupted forces, the Silvanesti shout at them to "Stop interfering! Don't kill! We can handle this!" Of course, over the din of battle, their voices may get drowned out at the DM's discretion.

Beyrinn Bladeturner: AC 1; MV 12"; Rgr 10; hp 75 (43); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2; THAC0 12; AL CG

Beyrinn is a ranger and the leader of this Silvanesti group. Their task is to scout out the area for future clean-up groups. Beyrinn is never without his giant *slayer long sword* +2. He wears an *elven cloak*, a *ring of faerie*, chain mail, and +3 *shield*. He is betrothed to Caerina and guards her jealously.

Caerina Spellborne: AC 0; MV 18"; Mu 11; hp 27; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3; THAC0 16; SA spell use; MR 5%; AL CG

Caerina is a Wizard of the White Robes. She is quite beautiful and of very good disposition. Unlike most of her people, she is tolerant of all other races, preferring to judge people on an individual basis. She wears a *robe of the archmagi* and wields a *dagger* +3. She also wears a *ring of wizardry*, thus doubling her 1st-



and 2d-level spells. Her betrothal to Beyrinn was not her idea, and she is rapidly getting second thoughts.

Millororn Naturefriend: AC 0; MV 18; Dr 11; hp 65 (33); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4; THAC0 14; SA spell use; AL N

Millororn comes from a line of druids that dates back to before the Cataclysm. He, like Caerina, is very tolerant of non-elf races, but is easily angered by those who harm nature. He wears a *cloak* +3 and a *ring of protection* +3 and wields a *Staff the woodlands* +4.

Ordinary Silvanesti elves (7): AC 4; MV 12"; F5; hp 35; #AT 16; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 16; AL CG

Twisted elves (18): AC 5; MV 18"; HD 7; hp 35; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8; THAC0 13; SD normal elven resistances; AL CE

These elves are mutated savages who attack with a claw/claw/bite combination.

Twisted unicorns (3): AC 2; MV 24" ; HD 4+4; hp 32; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d12; THAC0 15; SA horn: double damage at +2 to hit, teleportation; SD immune to death magic, charms or hold spells; AL CE

These unicorns are deformed, with portions of their skeletons showing.

The battle has been going on for two rounds before the party finds it. One unicorn and three twisted elves are out cold.

Once melee ends, and all the deformed opponents are under restraint (or dead), Beyrinn will interrogate the party. He is very suspicious of their motives. If they killed some of the deformed beasts, the Silvanesti angrily berate them and attempt to drive them off. If the party merely subdued the enemy, their reception is slightly better.

Millororn and Caerina are anxious to talk with the party, especially if the healing rains have come. If the elves can be convinced that the party did this good deed, they become very warm toward the

PCs and offer any aid they can. Once they bind their wounded, they'll even accompany the group as far as the tomb.

Otherwise, after Beyrinn interrogates them and is satisfied that they mean no evil, he and his group take their leave, refusing to give or receive aid. An interesting possibility is for Caerina to show interest in a male elven PC. If the PC has been especially heroic in the melee or shows great kindness to her, make a reaction roll. If the PC is human, impose a 10% penalty.

Beyrinn, seeing this, will attempt to make Caerina jealous by showing interest in a female PC. No roll is necessary since he does not mean it, but he would prefer a PC elven maiden. Of course, this strategy backfires and drives Caerina even more toward the object of her affection.

The guardians of The Tomb

At last, a structure of some sort becomes visible in the distance. If the Silvanesti are with the party, they tell them that the structure should be the tomb of Pahkar-Ran Theremikos, a Master of the White Robes. At this point, the elves give their blessings and farewells (Caerina may stay with the party if her reaction to an elven PC was exceptionally strong).

This tomb, a once-graceful object carved of bright living crystal, has become dark, smoky, and twisted. It is listing at a 25-degree angle into the mire. Worse still, 120 feet behind the tomb is a 40-foot-wide gaping hole in the muck. This is the entrance to the lair of the mated pair of black dragons. There is a 30% chance for one of the dragons to be lazily perched atop the tomb.

Ahragim and Dhaymos (Black Dragons): AC 3; MV 12"/24"; HD 8; hp 40; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/3d6; THAC0 12; SA acid breath; AL CE

These malicious dragons are very cheeky, staking out territory claimed by the green dragon faction. Thus far, they have been left alone. In their underground lair are six eggs and two very

young offspring (HD 8; hp 8, Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d6). If any offspring or eggs are harmed, the parents go into a furious rage that gives them +2 to their attack rolls and causes all opponents to make another save vs. dragon fear, at a -2 penalty.

Their treasure includes 3,900 stl, 11 black pearls worth 500 stl each, an *elixir of life*, a *jug of alchemy*, a *longtooth dagger*, a *shield* +2, an *elven cloak*, and the best prize of all: a *black dragonslayer bastard sword* with black diamonds, worth 10,000 gp total, set in the handle.

The favorite tactic of these dragons is to hurl large gobs of caustic, blinding swamp mud into the PCs' faces, then use their breath weapons. The mud can hit up to six PCs. Each victim must make a Dexterity Check with a +1 penalty or be blinded for 1d4 rounds.

Also, the ground directly in front of the lair entrance is quickmud, a quicksand variant, in which a victim will drown and die in 2d8 rounds.

Inside The Tomb

The bronze doors are green with verdigris. They must be pulled open, but since they have not been opened in ages, they are stuck fast. Two PCs may combine their efforts on each door. It requires 33 Strength points to open each one.

As the doors open, the party smells a foul, sickening gas that requires a save vs. poison or fall helpless due to nausea for 2d4 rounds. With the doors open, 12 spectral minions, long-dead elf warriors leap out and attack ceaselessly.

Spectral Minions (guardians): AC 2; MV 30"; HD 7; hp 56; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 13; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; MR 20%; AL CG

Ages ago, when the archmage was buried, they had volunteered to guard the tomb of their master. The password is Lunitari. If anyone utters it, the minions immediately cease fighting, bow deeply to the party and fade away forever.

The 50-foot-by-50-foot chamber they guarded is plain, but the floor is at an angle (remember that the tomb is list-



ing), and one third of the floor is covered in swamp mire. This portion lies to the party's right.

The walls still bear murals of the elven wizard performing mighty feats of magic in the pre-Cataclysm days. A door located in the wall opposite the main entrance leads out of this room.

A thick, blackened layer of tarnish stains this door. If this is scraped away, the party discovers that the door is solid silver. It is also locked.

More than just locked, this door is *wizard locked* at 18th-level ability, with a *symbol of fear* etched on top of the door frame.

Upon gaining entry, the party sees a chamber 30 feet square. The right-hand side is covered in swamp slime exactly like the room before it. An elaborately carved sarcophagus has slid across the floor and landed squarely in the muck. There is also a staff, a sword, and a suit of elven chain propped up on the wall, plus a row of bookshelves with scrolls and books.

As soon as any item is touched, the temperature in the room plummets to 20 degrees Fahrenheit and the door slams shut and *wizard locks* itself again. A breeze kicks up though there are no holes leading outside.

Two rounds later, a ghostly shape appears. This is the elven archmage returning as a haunt. He doesn't like the fact that his tomb was disturbed and his coffin slid into the muck. He wants it restored to its proper place and his crypt righted again. Rather than attack the PCs, he will ask them to do this for him.

If they agree, he will hover over them, watching until the job is done. The door will unlock and the temperature return to normal. Once the task is complete, the PCs may take the prized knowledge they sought.

If the party refuses to help, the elven haunt will reluctantly attempt to possess a PC and do the job himself.

Haunt (Pahkar-Ran Theremikos): AC 0/victim's AC; MV 6"/as possessed victim; HD 5/victim's hp; #AT 1 as 5-HD monster; Dmg special/by weapon; THAC0 15; SA possession; SD cannot be turned, hurt only by silver, fire, or magi-

cal weapons when in natural state; AL CG

Full details of the haunt's powers can be found in *Monster Manual II*. In this special instance, the elf's spell ability will return once possession is complete.

As far as righting the tomb goes, the party should feel free to try different solutions. The initial problem is that the ground has softened terribly due to the encroaching swamp.

The muck is six feet deep in the tilted corner of the room. The coffin weighs 600 pounds. A serious problem with this task is that there is a large hole in the wall where the swamp oozed in. Unfortunately, a neo-otyugh also found its way into the muck, as has a colony of 20 rot grubs. As soon as PCs enter the muck, the neo-otyugh rears up and attacks while the rot grubs burrow into the PCs' legs.

Neo-Otyugh: AC 0; MV 6"; HD 12; hp 84; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3; THAC0 9; SA Disease; SD Never surprised; AL N

This abhorrent creature will attempt to drag down two PCs into the muck and flee out the seven-foot-wide hole to the swamplands. Victims drown in 1d4 rounds.

Rot Grubs (20): AC 9; MV 10"; hp 1

These white worms have been made quiescent by the neo-otyugh. There is a sort of symbiotic relationship, where the neo-otyugh brings them carcasses to burrow into, and the grubs leave the monster alone to enjoy the swamp slime in this dark corner of the tomb.

When the PCs have completed the restoration, the haunt expresses its gratitude and fades away, its soul finally at rest. It gives permission for the party to take all the scrolls and books, but asks that they do not take any other items.

The Return Trip

Once the knowledge has been secured, the party must return to Palanthus. They can retrace their steps back to Qualinost and take a ship back home.

Random encounters for the return trip should be the same as the initial journey. This includes the extra encounters featuring dragons.

Queen Alhana grants them a slightly better reception this time and offers to pay the party's way back to Palanthus. There are even hints of strengthening diplomatic relations if one of the PCs wishes to be an ambassador.

epilogue

The party is again attacked by blue dragons on the way back to Palanthus. Upon their return, the council is very pleased that the party has secured the information.

In the following days, weaponsmiths and mages begin the work of creating the new items. However, it will be many months before the first one is complete. Only time will tell just how potent the magic truly is.

As for the reward, the council keeps its word. Each PC becomes a titled noble and gains a plot of land of 10,000 square miles. Here he may build a place to call home and settle down.

Any PC who exposed the draconian spies on the council may be offered the vacated seats.

Future adventures may range from more intrigue on the council to returning to Silvanesti and helping in the restoration of the land. Certainly, any PC who chooses to be an ambassador to the elves will find himself enmeshed in Silvanesti/Qualinesti politics!

Tales from The Kender Garden

In the Kender village of Kendknow, which lies somewhat southwest of the "great" city of Kendermore, the children play as kender children do. If you can imagine the effects of two tornados smashing against each other, then you have some idea what kender children are like. And that's when they're at rest, not when they are playing!

Even kender children rest, although they don't rest for as long as their parents would like; when they rest, they talk to each other. Every few years or so, after they talk, lying on their backs in the kender gardens, they get *ideas*. Interesting ideas.

Kender children do listen to the stories that they are told, even though it seems that they are too busy picking each other's pockets to notice. Kender children are quite perceptive. They listen to stories about the evil in the world quite intently. Every generation or so, the kender children wonder why someone doesn't go out and defeat the evil. It seems highly illogical that evil should be allowed to exist (a notion that would horrify Gilean, but Gilean has never been very good with children). So the kender decide to go out into the world to conquer evil.

Now, this usually doesn't last very long. After a few hours they get hungry, forget all about fighting evil, and return to the village. This is the way it has been with kender for generations. What has made the crusade of the kender from Kendknow different from the others is Hudan Stonethrower. Every kender child in Kendknow knows that Hudan can throw a stone farther than any other kender child, which accords him enormous respect and prestige. Hudan is not only strong, but he came up with the brilliant notion that it would take at least a few days for them to conquer evil, so he instructed his fellow kenderlings to gather food for the journey. This was not difficult; kender acquire their "acquisition" skills from stealing a pie or a roast pigeon from their mothers when they are not looking; this is the curse of kender mothers, placed on them by the gods.

Thus, the 30 kender children of Kendknow departed their homes. This was several weeks ago, and they have not been seen since. Goodlund can be dangerous. The kender are now asking everyone for help in finding the children and bringing them back home.

dm's Information

"Crusade" is an adventure set in Goodlund after the War of the Lance. It is intended for characters level 1-3, and should include at least one kender.

In this adventure, the player characters search Goodlund for 30 missing kender children. The PCs should begin somewhere close to Goodlund, thus hearing about the situation from kender messengers, since word of disappearance of a few kender children is not likely to stir much interest elsewhere. The children are somewhere in the Kenderwood, the forests of Goodlund, and will undoubtedly get into great trouble.

In truth, the kender children are scattered, no longer in one group. As certain things poked their individual interests, they left the main group, promising to meet later "by the big tree over there" once they have taken care of evil. The main group has been captured by a renegade magic-user—Oldar the Green Mage, although they don't know it. Oldar is fairly kind, and doesn't intend to hurt them, but plans to use them in his quest for the ingredients of an immortality potion he uncovered, which require the wings of a faerie dragon. Kender children are supposed to be on good terms with that rarest and most exotic of dragons, which is why Oldar has kidnapped them.

The rest of the kender are either wandering around the forest, or in various predicaments. It is up to the player characters to save them. Worse yet, the player characters have to put up with them on the way home!

goodlund

Goodlund is described as a land of vast forest and small villages, and not much else is known by the sages, most of whom

don't talk to the kender for fear of losing their maps. While the kender are prone to wild exaggerations and colorful stories that don't take the truth into account, with work we can come up with a more detailed picture of the kender's homeland.

Goodlund is indeed a land of vast forest and tiny villages. Most of the villages are kender, the dominant species of the land. Many of these villages are deserted, and have fallen into decay. This is because kender will occasionally get so bored that they decide that it would be more exciting to move and build a new village than to remain in the same old place. The deserted villages are left for kender to explore later; once they have been left alone for awhile, they become interesting again. The other creatures of Goodlund appreciate this, since they take over the kender villages once they're gone.

The kender are not the only intelligent creatures in Goodlund (although as kender are prone to admit, they are certainly the most interesting).

Goodlund was once the home of the city-state of Edon, a part of Istar that controlled much of the land which is now Goodlund following the Ogre Wars. Edon was particularly advanced in the arts of magic, and grew in power. Their power and pride was so great that they broke off from Istar to form their own separate realm, and more shockingly, broke off from the Orders of High Sorcery to form their own society of mages.

This brought the wrath of two terrible enemies down upon them. The destruction of Edon, which took place 410 years prior to the Cataclysm, was quick and terrible. All that remains of Edon are ruins, scattered





over Goodlund, much to the delight of the kender. The great ruins near Kendermore are of the city of Edon itself. There are other remnants of Edon, which will be encountered in the adventure.

Goodlund is the home of many creatures, some good, some evil, that may be encountered during the adventure.
Random Encounters (Goodlund)

D20 Roll Encounter

- | | |
|----|-----------------------|
| 2 | Dragon, Faerie |
| 3 | Unicorn |
| 4 | Spectral Minions |
| 5 | Dragon, Green |
| 6 | Troll, Forest (N) |
| 7 | Draconian, Baaz |
| 8 | Owl |
| 9 | Bear, Black |
| 10 | Kender, Party (1) |
| 11 | Forest Creature (2) |
| 12 | Squirrel, Normal |
| 13 | Bear, Brown |
| 14 | Badger |
| 15 | Draconian, Sivak |
| 16 | Pedipalp, Huge |
| 17 | Giant, Hill |
| 18 | Centaur |
| 19 | Dryad |
| 20 | Groaning Spirit (N) * |

* (N) night only

Encounter Explanations

(1): A kender party is either (20% of the time) 1-3 lost kender children (a maximum of ten lost kender may be found in this manner) or (80 % of the time) a kender search party (led by either a kender fighter of level 2-5 [20% chance], a kender ranger of level 2-5 [50% chance], or a kender handler of level 4-8 [50% chance]). The search party consists of 4d4 other kenders; while they are greatly concerned about the lost children, this does not stop the searchers from acting like kender (handling objects from any player characters they encounter, etc.).

(2): Forest creatures are ordinary forest denizens, such as deer, rabbit, grouse, raccoons, skunks, etc. It is up to the DM to choose appropriate creatures.

Some of the creatures of Goodlund have their own societies, which should be examined before one travels in these

lands.

Unicorns, especially Forestmaster unicorns (*see DRAGONLANCE® Adventures*, Unified Ansalon Monster Chart, p. 116) are a rare species; they live in the depths of the forest, away from other creatures, in close-knit family units. Many are the kender tales of kenders racing unicorns, catching them, and riding them bareback (these tales are "exaggerations," i.e., totally false, but they are numerous). Seeing a unicorn is considered to be a sign of good luck by kender, who seek them out relentlessly. The unicorns, on the other hand, do not mind the kender, and seem to enjoy leading them on great chases.

Forest trolls are another matter entirely. These are not true trolls, but cursed soldiers from the ancient war with Edon who were transformed into undead with the appearance of trolls; they tried to pillage their ruined strongholds during the fall of Edon. It is debatable whether the curse was placed on them by the Edon mages, or by the Wizards of the Black Robes to prevent them from gaining the knowledge of Edon. Certainly this curse does not apply to anyone who scavenges the ruins today, although there are other difficulties.

Forest trolls are extremely nasty but rare; tormented by the memory of life, they try to slay all living creatures that they encounter. Forest trolls vanish during the day (they do not take damage from sunlight—they merely fade from existence and reappear at the same spot at nightfall). They have the standard powers of trolls (attacks, regeneration, etc.), but it requires a silver or magical weapon to affect them. They can be turned by clerics as though they were wraiths. Forest trolls are extremely deadly, and even the most curious of kender have learned the hard way to avoid them (this doesn't stop the kender from having a little fun with them, of course). Humans slain by a forest troll become forest trolls in three days, unless a proper burial ceremony is performed. Forest trolls are encountered individually, since they attack anything, including each other.

Hill giants are native to the hilly area in southern Goodlund. Despite their evil

nature, they almost never attack kender, for reasons that are not recorded. Perhaps they believe that kender are beneath their notice, or perhaps there is an ancient pact between giant and kender. None can say. While they rarely associate with each other, kender and hill giants have lived as neighbors in relative peace for several centuries.

Centaurs live in sparsely forested areas in central Goodlund. Their dwelling places are simple; large circular groves cut in the forest, protected from the elements by a dome-shaped net of ivy and gossamer. They hunt game (the paths near their dwellings are marked with hoof-prints, a sure sign that centaurs are near), but try to keep to themselves. They trap the entrances to their dwellings with non-lethal traps (web nets and sloping pit traps) to capture intruders, rather than kill them, although they do not hesitate to kill draconians and forest trolls. They usually leave kender in the trap long enough for them to get bored, and then promise to release them if they leave immediately. (Of course, the kender don't promise not to return a few minutes later. . . .)

Running "Crusade"

This is not a very tightly scripted adventure; the DM is not given details on time and place for each potential encounters. Instead a lot is left to his imagination. As long as the players are entertained, keep going.

The key to successfully running this adventure is the handling (no pun intended) of the kender children. Here are some things to consider when running them as NPCs:

1) Kender children do not know the meaning of the words "shut up!" Even if there is a patrol of draconians nearby, they will still be yelling and screaming at each other as if they were playing back at Kendknow. This attracts attention.

2) Kender children have conveniently short memories. If the PCs somehow (by being very forceful) get them to promise to be quiet, they will sulk for two minutes (at most) and then forget their promise and return to normal behavior.



3) Kender children want adventure. If they see a cave, they proclaim that this must be the Cavern of Takhisis and they immediately race each other to see who can enter it first. If there is a battle, kender children always get involved, whether it means hitting a forest troll in the back of the leg with a stick or sneaking behind and stealing a dagger from an attacking draconian.

4) Kender children have different personalities. Each kenderling has slightly different ways of acting in a situation. It is up to the DM to judge what a particular kender will do.

Attack of The Draconians

This encounter should be played early in the adventure, so the players have some kender to look after for the rest of the adventure. This encounter occurs on a well-worn path in western Goodlund. Three kender are being chased by five draconians (four Baaz and one Bozak). The kender are taunting as the draconians close in; the brush is too thick for the dragonmen to use their flying ability, and the draconians are having great difficulty pursuing them on foot, but are too enraged to care.

Baaz Draconians (4): AC 4; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 2; hp 11, 8, 6, 3; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; THAC0 16; MR 20%; XP 92 each; AL LE; SD turn to stone when slain—slayer must make Dex Check at a -3 penalty or weapon is stuck in stone for 1d4 rounds

Bozak Draconian: AC 2; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 4; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 15; MR 20%; XP 275; AL LE; SD explode when slain, inflicting 1d6 points of damage (no save) to all in a 10-foot radius

The kender children:

Makland Swimmer (Ranger 1, hp 7): Makland is a competent kender woodsman and young hunter, but believes himself better than he actually is. He considers himself to be an adult; in trouble, he's the one who comes up with ideas to escape and never listens to anyone ("If we tie up these vines to these trees, the forest trolls will trip." "Makland, there

isn't time!" "Oh yes there is." [Tie, tie.] Prominent characteristics: Leader. Always takes initiative. Loves to demonstrate his ability. Cannot resist a chance to swim (even in freezing water or rapid rivers).

Joween Brightgem (Fighter 1, hp 5): Joween is a young kender girl who knows about fighting. Joween is rather husky for a kender girl, which causes numerous insults (and just as many fights, with Joween as the winner). Humans would call her a tomboy. Joween always must have her way, and if she doesn't get it, she'll complain bitterly and unceasingly ("We should have gone down the other path! We're lost and it's all your fault! These are our woods and we know what you're doing!") Prominent characteristics: Bossy, must have own way. Never backs down from a fight. Constantly complains.

Raddell Starthumb (Handler 1, hp 3): Raddell is the personification of the word "inquisitive." He is constantly asking questions, often annoying questions, frequently insignificant questions, even when he knows the answers to them ("How many times do you eat in a year? Do adventurers get married? When are you going to get married? When are you going to eat? Have you ever seen a dragon? Have you ever seen a draconian?"). He also has a habit of taking objects from people, pulling them out, and asking "What does this do?" at least ten times a day. Prominent characteristics: Always asks questions. Curious. Follows orders. Always hungry.

As the encounter begins, the characters will note that some of the draconians are limping badly. Makland thought to make some caltrops and throw them onto the path as they retreated; the lead draconian (the one with 3 hit points) has been badly injured from them. If the PCs wish to ambush the draconians, the characters automatically gain surprise; the draconians are so busy with the kender (and their taunts) that they aren't thinking straight.

After the encounter, Makland takes full credit for the victory ("If my caltrops hadn't slowed them down, you never would have made it!") and introduces the group to the party. Joween is com-

plaining that Makland forced her to run away when she could have taken them on by herself. Raddell goes up to each player character, asking: "Is that a magical sword? Are you really an adventurer? Have you ever met Kronin? Is that sword magical? Do you know any spells? Have you ever seen a dragon? Are you carrying a magical sword?"

If the player characters ask the kenderlings to follow them back to Kendknow, Makland protests that they can't go back right now; they were supposed to meet Hudan Stonethrower at the tree; it's just a little way back there, "We know how to get there." Of course, he hasn't a clue; if the party asks the kender to lead them back there too, he designates a tree at random as the tree where they agreed to meet Hudan. Joween complains bitterly that this isn't the tree. If asked whether this is the tree, Raddell ignores the question and starts asking the characters questions about the trees that they've seen, as well as asking to stop for a bite to eat.

Giant Problems

In this encounter, the party comes upon two more kender, just as they are being "attacked" by a vicious hill giant.

It has been a long trek. While searching for the kender, images of needles in haystacks come to mind, but are rejected as being overly optimistic. As the party crosses into a glade at the edge of some large hills, they see a kender running around the legs of a young hill giant as the hill giant tries to catch him, while a second kender hangs on to the hill giant's neck. "Can't catch me!" the running kender says, somersaulting under a clumsy attempt to grab him.

What's really going on here is that the hill giant is a nice hill giant (as hill giants go) and is only playing with the kender. If the party observes before jumping in, the hill giant finally catches the kender, forces him to say "please," and then releases him unharmed, while the second kender slides up and down the giant's back. If the party attacks the hill giant, the kender rush toward them, (and into the line of fire) crying out, "Don't hurt our friend!"



The hill giant's name is Oghog. He is a particularly clumsy and unpopular hill giant in his community, so he often wanders alone. Today he was lucky enough to find some kender friends. Oghog does not fight unless he will die if he doesn't fight back (i.e., when he has lost at least ten hit points). If Oghog is left alone to play, he'll let the kender go free an hour later.

Oghog (Young Hill Giant): AC 5; MV 12"; HD 7; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6; THAC0 13; SA hurl rocks 2d6; XP 670; AL CN

The kender children:

Wekkon Treeskimmer (Handler 1, hp 4): Wekkon believes that life is a game—a game that should be played while yelling at the top of one's lungs. He is not happy unless he is playing, but that's never a problem—he never stops playing. Prominent characteristics: Must play. Must yell. Loves to climb trees.

Buldris (Handler 1, hp 3): Buldris gets easily bored; he would get bored in the middle of a battle with draconians after five seconds. He never hesitates to tell anyone he's bored either. As a result, Buldris is easily distracted; worse he wanders off by himself without telling anyone! Prominent characteristics: easily bored. Even more easily lost.

If the incident is resolved without bloodshed, the kender readily agree to join the party. Otherwise, they run away ("We'll bring them back!" cry the other kender as they chase after them.) and wonder of wonders, all the kender come back (after a long chase and much worrying). If Oghog is killed, they complain about it for the rest of the trek ("Are you going to kill us too? How are you going to do it? You must be evil because only people who are evil kill kids, even if they're giant kids. Why aren't you wearing black? If you're evil you're supposed to wear black....")

Test of a Stranger

As the characters journey, they may find themselves being scouted by owls (have the most perceptive character make an Intelligence Check at -7 to notice). If

the characters try to communicate with the birds, the owls will fly away.

The owls are the servants of the Green Mage, Oldar, who has the magical ability to communicate with them. Oldar lives in one of the old Edon ruins, where he found many volumes of magic still preserved. Through study, Oldar became a powerful magic-user. Oldar considers himself to be a mage of the New Edon. He despises the Orders of High Sorcery; in Oldar's view, they are tyrants who try to keep magic to themselves, when magic should be free to all, without sadistic tests. Oldar is one of the most powerful renegade sorcerers in Krynn.

Oldar has found a formula used by the Edon mages to create a potion of immortality, a potion that allows eternal life (and was outlawed by Gilean for corrupting the natural balance). Oldar's goal is to gather the ingredients for this potion: seven drops of blood from a warrior who has passed the test of Kiri-Jolith, sand from an Eternity Glass, and the wings of a faerie dragon. He doesn't want to risk himself going after these things, so he will try to recruit the party.

As the characters approach an area of great hills, they see a figure cloaked in green walking down the road toward them. There is an owl on each of his shoulders (not familiars, just friends). Behind him walks a young warrior in plate mail. The man is middle-aged and balding, his hair is still brown, and he walks with a slight limp.

"You seek kender?" he says in a strong voice that belies his age. "I can find them for you. I know of lore that will find anything lost. Are you willing to place yourself at risk to learn?"

He introduces himself as Oldar, a humble mage ("Perhaps one day I shall journey to the Towers. Yes, perhaps one day. But I am not yet powerful enough to take the Test..."), and the young warrior as Burtran, who would be a Knight of Solamnia one day. Burtran, who is silent, blushes but says nothing; he scrutinizes the party members with great uncertainty. Oldar tells the party to rest, while he recites a poem that he discovered while searching through an ancient tome:

"Scattered the leaves, the Lost
Where are the sheep in Goodlund's hills?
They are sundered, wind-tossed
Where none can seek, try though they will.

To find them, dream
They sleep, but the secret shall awake
In lucid moonlit pools
Three riddles unlock

Three keys open one door
First key—blood of a Warrior True.
Seven drops from the hand of
A Challenge's Champion
Ungodly victory proclaim
Seven drops are the first Key.

Second key—most Perilous
The Dust of Time where Time stands
Still as dust in Eternal Night
Where dust should run.
Let the dust gallop from yesterday
Like centaur's hooves in a dry wind
On desert plains
He who passes a Nothing Peril
Seven grains is the second Key.

Third key—Stillborn
Jewel of Jewels in Dragon's Eye
Butterfly-winged forest singing
Faerie of Draco Paladine
So rare, fluttering leaves windborne
In cooling autumn breeze riding
Let sand and blood blow
Upon the Egg, the Third Key
Three keys shall open one door.

Gathered the leaves, the Lost
Here are the sheep, rejoined
At firesides they battle the frost
Dreaming of that Loss, purloined.

Oldar claims to know the meaning of the poem. The first key is seven drops of blood from a warrior who has passed the Test of the Warrior True, which he has heard takes place on the Cliff of Harrows. The Test is said to be very dangerous. The second key is a much more obscure reference. Oldar believes that it refers to the legend of the Survivors, an Edon stronghold located within some ruins in Southeast Goodlund that survived both the downfall of Edon and the Cataclysm. Exactly what it refers to is unclear; seven



grains of dust from some artifact within the city, perhaps? The third key is obvious; it is the egg of a faerie dragon, which is said to dwell in the Southwest corner of Goodlund.

Actually, Oldar altered the poem; he is quite willing to give the kender back once his objectives have been achieved. The first and final stanzas are an invention, to convince the party that they must gather these things to regain the lost kender. The third key was actually faerie Dragon wings, but Oldar altered that as well. He believes the party would be more willing to steal an egg than to cut off a faerie dragon's wings. Once he has the egg, Oldar believes he can lure the dragon into a trap.

If the party questions Oldar about seeing kender, he lies and says that he has not seen them. Burtran is silent and turns his face from the party; he doesn't like lying (he is an honorable man). Burtran is somewhat envious of any Knights of Solamnia in the party, and he is reluctant to speak. If he is befriended, he will say little, but rather ask questions and listen to tales of adventure.

Oldar: AC 3; MV 12"; MU (renegade) 8; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2; THAC0 18; S 18 I 17 W 10 D 16 Cn 15 Ch 12; robes of protection AC 5; AL CN
Spells:

1st Level: *comprehend languages, mount, read magic, sleep*

2d Level: *ESP levitate, web*

3d Level: *dispel magic, fly, lightning bolt*

4th Level: *monster summoning II, polymorph self*

Oldar has a single special ability, which he learned from studying Edon texts: he can *speak with owls* at will.

Oldar will use owls to spy on the party, perhaps *polymorphing* himself into an owl and following the PCs in person.

Burtran (AC 1; MV 6"; FTR 5; hp 31; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+3; THAC0 13; S 17 I 11 W 10 D 15 Cn 12 Ch 11; *long sword* +2; AL NG

Burtran follows Oldar because of promises that Oldar can make him a Knight of Solamnia. He is really a nice person and a sturdy warrior, but he is rather naive and has little self-

confidence. Burtran defends Oldar to the death, unless he is presented with proof of Oldar's evil. He knows that the kender are hidden in caves in the ruins where Oldar lives, but he is willing to let Oldar get away with his lie because Oldar's goals are important. Burtran will not murder people (if Oldar were to cast a *sleep* spell on the party, he would tie them up but not permit them to be killed in their sleep).

The kender children and Burtran get along well, while Oldar is constantly annoyed at them for taking his spell components from his pockets.

force of arms

The Cliff of Harrows is reached only after a long trek into south-central Goodlund. The PCs reach the cliff at night, with the bright light of Solinari near High Sanction, illuminating a thick and treacherous fog. When they reach the peak of the hill, one side of which terminates in steep cliff, a single figure will approach them.

It is a man, slightly taller than six feet, quite broad and muscular. His arms are scarred from battles past, and his nose is broken. His hair is a short but dishevelled mop of brown curls. He is unarmored, wearing only a worn shirt and pants that have seen many miles. He is armed only with a woodsman's knife and a coil of rope draping his back, and a bottle of water in a tattered sack.

"You have come for the Test?" he inquires. If the characters concur, he continues, "I know how to perform it. I am the opponent. There may be some danger in it. Once you have agreed to it, you may not back out. Which masters of the physical arts shall step forward?"

Only characters from the fighter class are eligible for the Test. If a character agrees, the man smiles and hands the character a pole (instructing him to remove his armor, if he is wearing any, as the contest must be taken unarmored). He steps to the edge of the cliff. This is a battle of strength and desperation. Each man will grasp the pole and try to push his opponent to the ground. One man must stand with his back to the cliff (i.e.,

be close enough to be pushed over). It is the player character's choice as to who will take that position.

If asked his name, he will name himself Wetherback. Of course, this is really Kiri-Jolith himself; if asked where he comes from, he will say that he is from "around."

If a player character agrees to the challenge and then backs out, he receives a curse. He will find his fears magnified; he strikes at -2 on all attack rolls in combat, and he makes all saving throws at a -2 penalty.

If the player character accepts the challenge and asks Wetherback to take the risky position, Wetherback easily throws the PC to the ground, causing 1d4 points of damage from the force of the impact. Wetherback shakes his head, proclaims that the PC is not a "Warrior True," and asks if there are any other challengers.

If the party is insane enough to decide to attack him, he sits there with his arms folded and allows them to do as much damage as they can to him, until they get tired. Then he reveals his true nature and allows the PCs to beg for forgiveness. (It requires a +3 weapon to harm him; he is AC -8, has 500 hp, and is a 29th-level fighter/ cleric. He has enough *heal* spells to last a lifetime.) If they ask for forgiveness, then he will *geas* them to find the lost kender and return them safely. Then he leaves.

If a challenger arises who agrees to take the risky position (with his back to the cliff), Wetherback smiles and hands him the pole. Wetherback pushes the character over the edge, where he falls 20 feet into a deep lake, taking no damage whatsoever. If the character cannot swim, Wetherback dives in and rescues him, promptly followed by Makland Swimmer, who will challenge Wetherback to a race (followed by the rest of the kender). Wetherback proclaims that this opponent is a "Warrior True;" if he is a fighter, he may change classes and become a Solamnit Knight of the Crown (any stats below minimum for entry into the Crown are raised to minimum). In any event, the Warrior True gains enough experience to qualify for the lowest level of the Order of the Crown.



After a few hours or whenever the PCs finally manage to get the kender out of the water ("Look, is that a lake monster?" Makland shouts as he spots a huge rock in the fog-shrouded lake. "Let's go over there and see!"), Wetherback builds them a fire to dry off, and they have a feast and trade stories. He tells tales of the valor of those who fought in the last War of the Lance. On the subject of the Warrior True, he says, "Some say that the true warrior always takes the position of maximum advantage. Perhaps it is true, but the Warrior True must also be prepared to fight the most difficult battles if they need to be fought. Those who have the courage to dare perils and battle the impossible are the truest warriors of all."

If asked for advice on the PCs' current predicament, Wetherback tells a story: "I remember a young man once, who set off on a great journey. He was not unlike you, strong, handsome, resourceful, intelligent, and daring. He was a paragon of men.

"Then he came to the crossroads. He was unsure how to go, so he asked a fellow traveler, and took his advice. Thus he was content, until he came to another crossroad, and he was again uncertain, so he asked another traveler, and again took his advice. And so on it went, until the man was old and tired and dull-witted. Then he found himself at his destination—it was the same spot he had started from. By taking advice, rather than making his own decisions, he had gotten nowhere.

"The gift of Gilean, free will, is a most important one. Had the Kingpriest appreciated it, there would not have been a Cataclysm. I shall not interfere with that gift by giving advice. Instead I shall wish you good fortune in dealing with your problem, and bide you never lose sight of that which is most important—the safety of the children."

If asked who he really is, he will smile and ask "Is that truly important? Who are you, really? A name is a name, but a person is really the sum of his deeds." If the players ask whether he is a god, he admits who he truly is.

In the morning, Wetherback is gone, leaving them to their second task. The

characters have no memory of the test, save whether they passed or failed, but they shall descend the Cliff of Harrows as changed men.

City of Dreams

In the southeastern parts of Goodlund (owls lead the way), there are ruins of the Edon. They are well-worn by time and thoroughly looted, except for one area—the City of Dreams, the Retreat of Goriden.

There is a 10% chance per hour that the PCs discover the Retreat; only men and half-elves are permitted to enter the city, the others (including kender, much to their frustration) must wait outside, prevented from entering by an unseen barrier.

The city is small. Goriden, an archmage of Edon, had anticipated that they could not defeat the Orders of High Sorcery. Thus, using the most powerful magics, he built the Glass of Eternity, a powerful artifact with the ability to affect the flow of time itself. Using a variant of the *mindspin* and *timereaver* spells, he created a real, yet illusionary city, using the Glass of Eternity as its foundation. In doing so, he escaped the Order of High Sorcery, the Cataclysm, and even Time.

There is one drawback to the Retreat. Every day is the same. Each day is an endless repetition of the last. Only when new creatures (such as the player characters) enter the city will the routine of the city denizens change. If anyone spends 24 hours in the city, he becomes part of the pattern and is trapped here forever. This is why Oldar, sensing that the city was a trap (but uncertain as to the nature of the trap) refused to enter the Retreat himself.

The city is ruled by Goriden, the archmage who created it, although he sacrificed most of his power to create it (he is now only a 6th-level magic-user). City life is divided into a number of rituals: in the morning, people are awakened by magical songbird statues. Those who are religious journey to a shrine devoted to their gods. Then there is a large breakfast feast in the city square. Following breakfast, tradesmen go to work for the day, shops display their wares, and street

musicians sing and entertain streetgoers. At sunset, the shops are closed, the streets are quiet, and families eat their dinner. In the evening, there are three types of entertainment: carousing at various taverns, attending plays, and the arena, where warriors issue challenges and test their skills. Anyone killed in the arena is re-created in the morning, so death in the Retreat is only temporary, unless Goriden chooses otherwise.

The city has a number of landmarks. There is a great temple of Paladine, styled on the temples of Istar. Goriden lives in a huge palace of beaten brass. In the center of the city square, there is a huge hourglass, in which the sand stands still.

This hourglass is not magical, the true Glass of Eternity is in Goriden's private chambers. The breaking of the glass in the city square tells Goriden that someone is out to destroy his city. Thus guards are instructed to pursue and slay anyone who breaks the glass in the city square (and these intruders will not be resurrected).

If the party is being pursued, they are approached by a young nobleman named Kurgan. Kurgan claims that the only way to escape from the city is to slay Goriden. He also claims to know a secret way into Goriden's chamber. Kurgan is really Goriden's brother and, while he does not wish to kill Goriden himself (fratricide is a mortal sin to those from Edon), he covets his power and position. If the party accepts, they are led to a secret entrance to Goriden's chamber. Kurgan is also lying: As long as the PCs have not spent 24 continuous hours in the city, they may enter and leave by the front gate at will.

Goriden is in his private chamber, along with four guards. The room is rich and huge (60 feet on a side and 30 feet high); it contains a large bed with many pillows, a polished marble floor decorated with diamond dust, beautiful tapestries woven with silver threads, and a huge bath. The room is supported by decorated bronze columns and a domed ceiling. The hourglass is hidden in a secret panel in the center of the ceiling.

"You have come to destroy us all?" Goriden states, apparently aware of their objective. "We have existed for hundreds



of your years. We are the last of our civilization. Would you really destroy us, by the thousands, to satisfy your greed? Can you willingly take so many lives? Are you that evil?"

He holds out an hourglass (not the real one, but another fake): "If you can be a slayer of a thousand innocent lives, if you revel in the destruction of beauty and grace and wonder, strike this glass with your sword, and bring an end to Edon. I shall not stop you."

If the party refuses to smash the hourglass, then Goriden will smile. "Leave my city now, and never return. This is not a place for waking man to walk. Leave us to live our endless dreams, and seek your destiny elsewhere."

If the party does smash the glass, Goriden will shout: "Think me a fool! I would never hand you the true glass of Eternity! Murderers!" And then he and his guards attack.

Goriden: AC 4; MV 12"; MU 6; hp 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+4; THAC0 16; S 16 I 17 W 14 D 16 Cn 15 Ch 14; SD permanent *protection from normal missiles, brooch of shielding, dagger +3, bracers of protection* AC 6; AL N
Spells:

1st Level: *charm person, dancing lights, magic missile, spider climb*

2d Level: *mirror image, web*

3d Level: *hold person, slow*

Guards: AC 3; MV 6"; FTR 3; hp 21, 18, 16, 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 16; N

If Goriden is slain, he reforms in 3d4 turns; he cannot be killed as long as the hourglass remains intact (Kurgan does not know this!). If Goriden recovers to find the player characters about to smash the real hourglass he will scream in a frantic voice, "No! Please, for pity's sake, do not shatter that!"

The real hourglass can be easily shattered by anyone who is not yet trapped in Edon (those who have spent more than 24 hours in Edon cannot affect it). When the glass is shattered, the city seems to melt into nothingness, turning to dust and blowing away in the wind. Those who successfully roll an Intelligence Check (at

-10 penalty) have a brief vision of a figure in red, holding a book, smiling slightly, and nodding in approval. Then there is nothing but ruins; all items taken from the city (save for dust from the true hourglass) disappear. All of its people are gone forever, like an interrupted dream.

The DM may wish to assign alignment changes to any good characters, as knowingly killing thousands of people is not something good (or even most neutral) characters would do.

It would also be surprising if no one began to suspect Oldar's motives at this point or even earlier. The DM may wish to subtract from the party's experience point gains if the players have not had a discussion of what exactly it is that Oldar is trying to get them to do. (If the players are going through this adventure unthinkingly, then they're not getting as much out of it as they could be, and their PCs should be penalized accordingly.)

Back To The egg

Following the escape from the Retreat, the kender begin asking several million questions about what exactly happened ("Did you see a dragon? How come we couldn't go in there? Didn't you find any kender? Did you kill anyone?")

Owls begin to appear again, directing the party to the lair of the faerie dragon, which is located in a heavily wooded area close to the coast of the Bay of Balifor. The faerie dragons have been spotted by the owls in this place (although Oldar has never dared attack them directly).

The local faerie dragons dwell in tree-top nests. There are about five faerie dragon nests in this region. The owls choose one that is isolated from the rest (out of the faerie dragon's telepathy range with the neighboring nests), a faerie dragon nest that has three eggs, but only one occupant—a mother faerie dragon (the male was eaten a week ago by a forest troll).

The faerie dragon will not willingly give up its egg (the nest is on a branch 60 feet above the ground). It is up to the player characters to figure out how to get it. The faerie dragon is very protective of its eggs.

Leafwing (Faerie Dragon): AC 5; MV 6"/24"(A); HD 4; hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2; THAC0 15; SA spells, breath weapon; SD invisibility; CG

Note that stealing the egg is not a good act. If the PCs do it, regardless of their reasons, they should be penalized with a shift toward evil on the alignment chart.

The grand finale

If the player characters successfully completed all three of Oldar's tasks, then he will thank them, take seven drops of blood from the Warrior True, tell the PCs that he found the kender, and let the PCs escort the kender home.

If the player characters failed in any of the tasks, well, Oldar is not very happy, but he isn't cruel either. He hands over all of the kender that he found and lets the characters take them home.

The major difficulty occurs if the player characters stick around and find out that Oldar is planning to chop off Leafwing's wings. Oldar will not back down from his plan to obtain immortality. To save Leafwing, the characters have to fight Oldar and Burtran.

Burtran can be brought over to the side of the player characters, if the party appeals to his desire to be a Knight of Solamnia. A true Knight of Solamnia would not permit a creature of good to be maimed for the sake of a mage's quest for power. If he wishes to be a Knight, Burtran will have to turn on his friend.

Burtran reluctantly agrees, and joins the party members, tears running down his cheeks.

If Oldar is slain, Burtran buries his body in the ruins with great sadness and ceremony, to the music of owls' mourning. If Oldar is captured alive, he asks to be taken to the Towers of High Sorcery. He realizes that he has failed, but before he dies, he wishes to address Par-Salian and the other masters of magic and damn the High Orders as a final gesture of defiance. He curses Burtran as a traitor, which distresses the warrior greatly.

mother love

This adventure is designed for a party of four to six 12th-level characters set after the War of the Lance.

Players' Introduction

You ride into Kalamán one afternoon to find the city in chaos, with smoke arising from one entire quarter. The Guard Commander tells you that at dawn a dragon raided the town, together with its ogre and hill giant minions, and rescued a force of Sivaks captured earlier which the townspeople had been about to execute. The commander did not see the dragon, but believes it to be red, since it caused fires. He is also worried because his spies tell him that the Red Dragonarmy is preparing a force to attack the city. He believes this attack on Kalamán and the force being prepared are connected. He wants you to find and deal with these two forces.

DM's Background

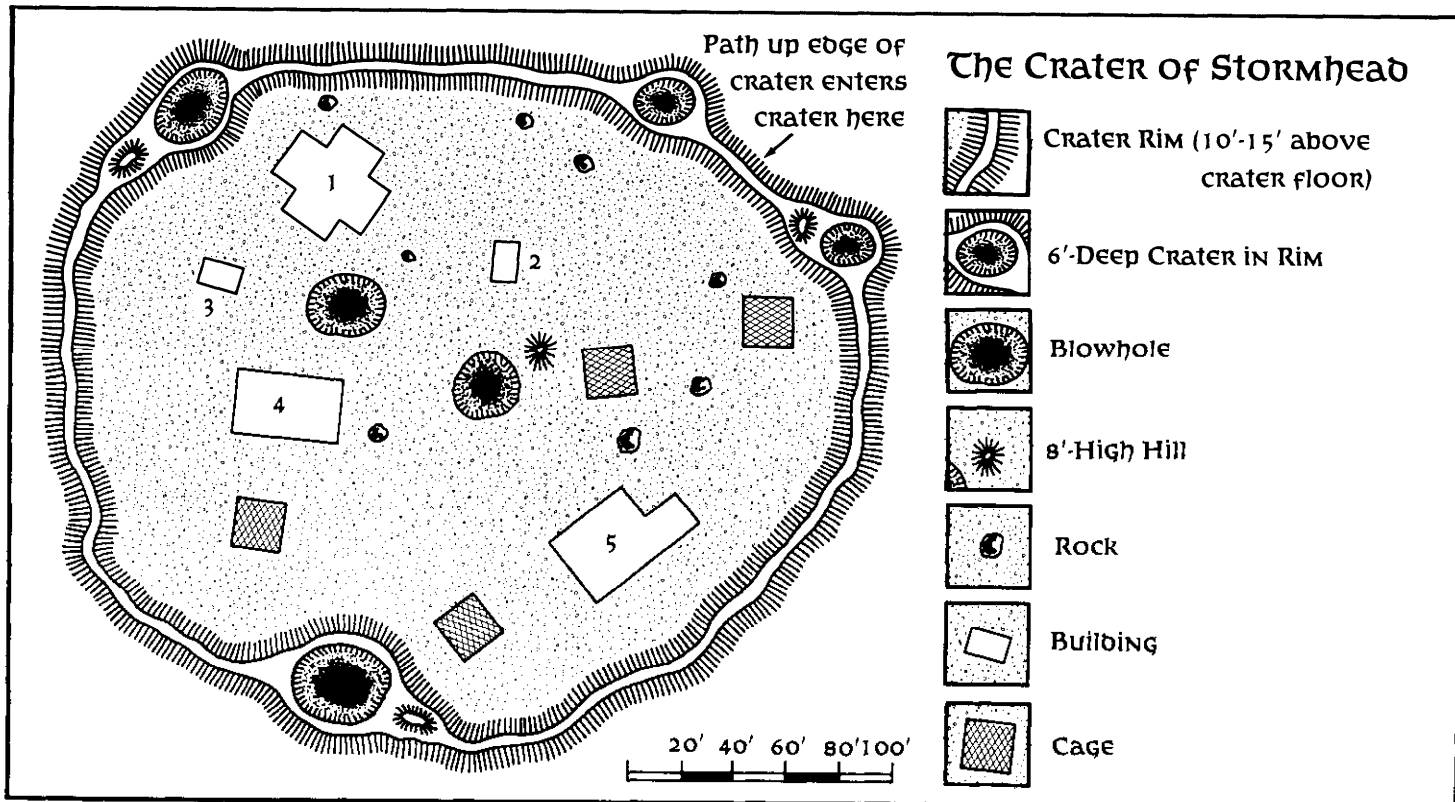
Ascania, a silver dragon, is trying to return Sivaks to dragon form by reversing the magic that corrupted the eggs at Sanction. She took over a force of troops from the Red Dragonarmy to assist her. While in Kalamán buying supplies (in her human form) she saw some captured Sivaks being marched in. She therefore gathered her troops and went to rescue them, diving out of the sun at dawn so she was not clearly seen. Her minions breached the wall of Kalamán and burst in after her. In the process, Ascania killed a handful of warriors who attempted to stop her. She is sorry about this, but they were only humans, and they must be evil since they tried to attack her. Her troops also killed a handful of people. During the assault, a number of fires were started by overturned braziers and so forth; many of the survivors of the attack claim these were started by the dragon's fiery breath.

Ascania took the Sivaks to her hideout in Mount Stormhead, the crater of a dormant volcano.

Meanwhile, a Sivak who escaped from Ascania returned to the Red Dragonarmy and told the Highlord about Ascania's scheme. The Highlord doubted the scheme would succeed, but realized that if it did, the other good dragons would have a powerful motive to attack the dragonarmies, round up the draconians and return them to dragon form. The Highlord therefore told Kansaldi, a lesser officer, to lead a force to ensure that Ascania does not succeed.

The Highlord also despatched an ogre mage to fly to Stormhead and sabotage the project, so that Ascania would not reach a breakthrough before Kansaldi's force reached Stormhead.

A small group of Knights of Solamnia learns of the attack on Kalamán soon after the party does. They follow the party to Stormhead to destroy the evil dragon that must be there.



The Journey To Stormhead

Stormhead is 60 miles southeast of Kalaman, at the end of the ridge of mountains east of Estwilde. It is likely to take the party about three days to travel this distance; they will probably reach Stormhead about 24 hours after Ascania and the Sivaks.

The party should not have any major encounters during the journey. Ascania's trail is reasonably easy to follow, and a number of local people saw the dragon and the draconians pass. The group did very little damage, to the surprise of the locals. If the PCs bother to talk to all the farms along the way, they find that a middle-aged woman with the group paid a couple of farmers for food during their journey.

There are no farms or habitations within a day's ride of Stormhead. The land is bleak, with little life except sparse ferns and shrubs. The trail is still clear and leads straight to the volcano.

A thin plume of dark smoke rises from the peak of this massive mound of grim rock. The tracks climb the narrow path that hugs the side of the mountain, spiralling about its flanks and ascending to the glowering heights perhaps 3,000 feet above.

As the lip of the crater is neared, the heat from the mountain increases. Above, the smoke spirals into the sky.

The Crater

Ascania chose Stormhead as her base because she felt she would not get in anyone's way there. The crater is also warm, with lots of space, and the good visibility gives early warning of impending attack.

The crater contains two blowholes that lead down 50 feet to molten magma: anyone falling into the magma is dead. The crater also contains four cages. Each cage contains 20 Sivaks. There are also five wooden buildings.

Building #1 is the laboratory; it has one major chamber and four small rooms opening off it for minor experiments. The main chamber is filled with the paraphernalia of magical research (stuffed

crocodiles, crystal balls, eye of newt, toe of frog, wool of bat, tongue of dog, books, jars of strange substances, etc.). The other chambers contain similar items: one has a complex network of glassware, which is actually a still for producing whiskey, run by Tharra (see page 89). The mages each assume this is someone else's experiment, an assumption of which Tharra has not disabused them.

Buildings #2 and #3 are the storehouses; both are kept locked (to keep the ogres and giants out). Ascania, all the mages, and Furniss have keys. Building #2 contains food and supplies; #3 contains alchemical and magical supplies.

Building #4 is the living quarters, a comfortable single-storey building with rooms for all the mages and the lab assistants. Ascania has a room in which she stays while in human form. Sqrnuult's room lacks a bed, but the other rooms each contain a bed, a wardrobe, a couple of chests, and a couple of chairs, together with personal items of the occupants.

Building #5 is the barracks for the giants and the ogres. Straw covers the floor, and a large bundle of blankets lies in one corner. This is Fathom's bed: anyone interfering with it will lose an arm. Normally a third of the troops are in here at any time, either asleep, playing cards, or eating. Furniss is sometimes in here with the giants.

Ascania

At first glance, Ascania is an impressive silver dragon; however, on a closer look, scars can be seen criss-crossing her flanks, the results of wounds received during the War of the Lance. She is a powerful, intelligent person, with full knowledge of her powers and abilities and a deep understanding of magic. She was involved in many of the battles of the War of the Lance, and she was seriously injured in the process. One result of her injuries is that she cannot lay any more eggs. Another is that she is not entirely sane.

However, she considers herself in perfect condition. Since she can have no more children, she is setting about rescuing her existing children from their awful fate by turning them from draconians

back into dragons. To this end, she obtained the services of some mages and built a laboratory.

Ascania is a motherly dragon, with a tendency to fuss. Her madness is that she is blind to the impossibility of her task; otherwise, she is quite sane. Ascania considers that any Sivak could have been formed from one of her eggs; she will therefore kill anyone harming any of her potential children. Suggesting that her project is impossible sends Ascania into fits of apoplexy in which she is capable of accidentally breathing frost or swiping at anyone foolish enough to be too close.

In her human form, Ascania looks like a plump, motherly woman in her late 40s. She has greying hair and is clad in a tatty skirt, blouse, and apron. She tends to bustle round, eternally busy about some task or other. Players are likely to assume on first sight that she is the camp cook or some such.

Ascania (large very old silver dragon): AC -1; MV9"/24"; HD 11; hp 77; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/5d6; THAC0 10; SA breath weapons, spell use; AL LG. Her spell book contains *charm person*, *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *find familiar*, *magic missile*, *continual light*, *knock*, *magic mouth*, *web*, *wizard lock*; *clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt*, *tongues*; *charm monster*, *minor globe of invulnerability* *wail of fire*; *hold monster*, *wall of stone*. She can cast two spells of each level from 1st to 4th, and one of 5th.

Ascania has a familiar, a cat called Tabitha. Tabby provides her with eyes and ears around the crater. Tabby has a proclivity for trouble and an exceptionally smug expression. Ascania is very fond of Tabby.

Tabitha: AC 6; MV 5"; HD 1; hp 4; #AT 2; Dmg 1d2/1; THAC0 20; SA rear claws 1-2; SD only surprised on a 1; AL LG

Ascania's associates

Three powerful mage researchers are working with Ascania; they were very flattered to be asked to work with a silver dragon, but are now privately having doubts about Ascania's abilities and sanity. However, they will stay with Ascania until the project is completed in a few days. The most skilled sorcerer is Elthoriel, an elven mage. This Qualinesti elf will die very soon after the party arrives at Stormhead when Kalro puts an axe through his spine from behind. (Kalro will dump the axe in Tharra's quarters in order to frame her, but Tharra was with Sqruuult at the time.) Elthoriel did not see his killer; he heard someone come in behind him, but thinking he was with friends, he did not look round.

Elthoriel: AC 10; MV 12"; MU 11; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (*dagger* +2); THAC0 16; S 9,118, W 14, Cn 13, D 13, Ch 14; SA spells; AL LG

Sqruuult is the second associate of Ascania. Sqruuult is a grell mage; its ten tentacles enable it to carry out complex experiments in the lab. Ascania considers it a highly competent researcher. Sqruuult is quite pleasant, unlike most grells. It is also a very proficient sorcerer. It is working with Ascania to show everyone that grells can be powerful mages, and are not all evil.

Sqruuult: AC 4; MV 12"; MU 9; HD 9; hp 29; #AT 11; Dmg 10 @ 1d4, 1d6; THAC0 19; SA paralysis, spell use; SD immune to lightning; AL LN

Sqruuult's spell book contains *burning tentacles* (as burning hands), *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *sleep*; *invisibility*, *knock*, *locate object*, *web*; *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *suggestion*, *tongues*; *dimension door*, *ice storm*, *polymorph self*; *stone shape*, *wall of force*.

Sqruuult has an homonculous, Kowl, which it uses to patrol the crater invisibly looking for intruders.

Kowl (Homonculous): AC 6; MV 6"/18"; HD 2; hp 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3;

THAC0 16; SA bite causes sleep; SD saves as Sqruuult

Lemundos Tals was a human sorcerer working with Ascania. Before the PCs reached Stormhead, Lemundos was slain, and his body dropped into the volcano. His killer is the dragonarmy agent Kalro, an ogre mage, who has polymorphed into Lemundos's form. Kalro's *headband of ESP* enables him to read the minds of those around him, to avoid making slips that would give him away. He has a coin of *alignment changing*, which reads neutral good, to disguise his true alignment. Lemundos/Kalro appears to be a friendly, decent man in his mid-30s with a ready wit.

Kalro's sabotage starts by killing Elthoriel. He then blows up the alchemical store (leaving a burning fuse, so that he has an alibi when it explodes). This leaves the lab with just enough materials to complete the experiment. Kalro tries to frame others for the crimes. Further acts depend on party actions (he will take advantage of any opportunities that arise), but ideas include freeing Sivaks or dispelling the *charm* on Fathom.

Kalro (ogre mage): AC 4; MV 9"/15"; HD 5+2; hp 39; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SA spells, *amulet of dispel magic* once/day (at 12th level); SD regenerates 1 hit point/round; AL LE. Spells: *fly*, *invisibility*, *polymorph to human*, *cause darkness*, *charm person*, *sleep*, *gaseous form* (he will use this to escape if in serious trouble), *cone of cold* (8d8 points of damage)

Ascania also has three laboratory assistants. The senior one is Furniss, a dour human with no sense of humor and little interest in the job. He works efficiently, but shows no initiative. When off duty, he can be found playing cards with the hill giants.

Furniss: AC 7; MV 12"; Ftr 4; hp 27; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); THAC0 17; S 16, I 10, W 12, Cn 15, D 14, Ch 9, AL CN

The second human assistant is Rorgil. Rorgil is only fractionally brighter than a gully dwarf and has a kender's sense of humor. Despite these handicaps, he is a cheerful, friendly person who brightens up the labs with his jokes. (He has not, as yet, caused a serious accident.) Ascania is very fond of Rorgil, as was Lemundos.

Rorgil: AC 6; MV 12"; Thf 5; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (*dagger*); THAC0 19; S 10, I 7, W 6, Cn 10, D 16, Ch 9; AL CG

The final lab assistant is Tharra, a female hill dwarf who left home after a dispute over a woman's place (she refused to cook and clean for her five brothers). Tharra is an intelligent, friendly, capable woman; she is the most useful of the lab assistants. She is also operating an illicit still in one of the side rooms while trying to keep it secret from Ascania and the mages. She is selling hooch to the hill giants and the Sivaks (this is one reason why the Sivaks are not making more trouble for Ascania). She is also giving hooch to Furniss in return for his silence.

Tharra (dwarven thief): AC 7; MV 12"; HD 6; hp 21; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); THAC0 19; S 13, I 15, W 14, Cn 15, D 15, Ch 12; AL NG

Ascania also has a small force of ogres and hill giants to assist her. These are all former members of the Red Dragonarmy, which Ascania raided when she collected her first group of Sivaks. All of them are evil, and Ascania is well aware that they are dangerous. They serve her because Ascania has *charmed* their leader, the hill giant Fathom. Fathom ensures the rest do as Ascania says. So long as Fathom survives, they will do as they are told. If they see Fathom killed during a battle, there is a cumulative 5% chance/round that each of them deserts and joins Kansaldi (see page 91), so long as Kansaldi is seen to be winning.

Fathom is a large, powerful hill giant who was in command of the Red Dragonarmy's hill giants. Fathom serves Ascania with absolute loyalty (thanks to the *charm*, which Ascania renews every few days for safety). He is a hard, violent war-



rior, whose natural pleasures include beating up lessers and torturing prisoners. If he ever broke the *charm*, he and his underlings would flee and join Kamsaldi. Kalro will cast *dispel magic* on Fathom, to free him from the *charm*, at an opportune moment.

Fathom (superior hill giant): AC 4; MV 12; HD 9+2; hp 64; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+7 (two-handed sword plus Strength bonus); THAC0 12; SA hurl rocks for 2d8; AL CE

Six hill giants: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 8+1; hp 37, 47, 34, 33, 35, 36; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+7 (great spear or axe plus Strength bonus); THAC0 12; SA hurl rocks for 2d8; AL CE

Eight ogres: AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4+1; hp 24; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; THAC0 15; AL CE

The Sivaks

There are 80 Sivaks in secure cages in the crater. Most of these (58 of them) were members of the Red Dragonarmy before Ascania rescued (they would say kidnapped) them. The other 22 were renegades from the fall of Neraka. These dragonmen were living as bandits near Kalamman before they were captured by a party of adventurers and taken to Kalamman for execution. Very few of the Sivaks want to go back to the dragonarmy; under the new Highlord they face only danger and death, so they prefer to become bandits. Given the opportunity, all the Sivaks will flee from Stormhead, pausing only to take what revenge they can on Ascania and the other mages.

The iron cages have simple locks. It will take a troll two full rounds to release the Sivaks from each cage.

80 Sivaks: AC 1; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 6; hp 30; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10, 2d6; THAC0 13; SD +2 on saves; MR 20%; AL NE

The Knights of Solamnna

Lord Douglas has led this company of Knights throughout the War of the Lance. In their last action almost all of their number died. Now the survivors of the company are looking for something heroic to do to regain their good name. When Lord Douglas learned of Ascania's attack on Kalamman, he led his Knights on a forced cross country march to Stormhead in order for them to kill a dragon.

Lord Douglas Varanqoss

Lord Douglas comes from an old family of Knights, and has very definite ideas about the way Knights should act. He still considers the word of the Measure more important than any so-called spirit of the Oath. Douglas distrusts dragons of any color; he prefers to think the worst of all dragons. He feels that the dragon who attacked Kalamman must be evil and he will not take any notice of its color. Douglas has a closed mind, which he seldom changes if he has made a decision. However, he is an honorable and brave warrior, who honestly does what he thinks is right.

Lord Douglas Varanqoss (Crown Knight): AC -2; MV 12"; Ftr 12; HD 10 + 6; hp 74; #AT 3/2 rounds; Dmg 1d8+3 (*long sword* +2); THAC0 11; S 16, I 13, W 10, Cn 14, D 12, Ch 16; AL LG; *plate mail* +2, *shield* +2, *footman's dragonlance*

Lord Gwyn Lightfoot: Second-in-Command

Lord Gwyn is apparently young and very slightly-built. "He" is actually Gwyneth—a woman in disguise. Gwyneth's father, a long-serving Knight, had no sons. Gwyneth therefore took her rightful place as her father's child in the ranks, disguised as a man. She has risen through the ranks over the past eight years; only her apparent youth has prevented her from taking command. She avoided detection with great care. She is calm, intelligent, and in combat uses speed and agility to defeat stronger but

slower opponents. She has never been seriously injured in a battle, due to her fighting skill. She is not very attractive. She wears *chain mail* +3, which adequately disguises her boyish figure. She respects Douglas, but is aware of his shortcomings. She will do what she can to maintain her disguise, but she hopes that in the aftermath of an heroic act she can reveal her true identity.

Lord Gwyn Lightfoot (Crown Knight): AC -5; MV 12"; Ftr 11; HD 10+4; hp 71; #AT 3/2 rounds; Dmg 1d8+2 (*long sword* +2); THAC0 10; S 14, I 16, W 15, Cn 14, D 18, Ch 14; AL LG; *chain mail* +3, *shield* +2

The knights

The eight surviving Knights in the command of Lord Douglas and Lord Gwyn are all veterans of previous battles. None are going to panic at the sight of a dragon or draconians. They will work together effectively. All are loyal and obey commands of Lord Douglas (or, if he is slain or incapacitated, Lord Gwyn), as long as the commands are not patently stupid or suicidal. Few will fight to the death unless specifically ordered to do so; they will fight hard, but will fall back if in serious trouble. (Any Knights who would have fought to the death died during the War of the Lance.) A couple suspect Gwyn is a half-elf, but do not hold this against him. Were they to know the truth, their loyalty would be less certain.

Typical Crown Knight: AC 2; MV 12"; Ftr 7; HD 8; hp 50; #AT 3/2 rounds; Dmg 1d8+1 (*long sword* +1); THAC0 14; S 15, I 12, W 12, Cn 14, D 13, Ch 12; AL LG

The Dragonarmy force

This force should arrive at Stormhead soon after the party deals with the Knights. It is led by dragonarmy officer Kamsaldi Flame-eyes, a priestess of Takhisis. Kamsaldi is a tall, imposing woman in her 30s, clad in distinctive red dragonscale armor. She is a competent, callous cleric, with few scruples and no morals.



Her only aim is to win, however much her own people or the other side suffer in the process. She hopes in the process to gain favor with the new Highlord of the Red Dragonarmy. She does not risk herself, and she flees if the battle goes against her. She does not attack directly if she can win by more devious means.

Kansaldi (12th-level human cleric): AC -3; MV 12"; HD 9+6; hp 58; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (*mace* +3); THAC0 14; S 14,115, W 17, Cn 13, D 16, Ch 18; SA spells; AL LE; *chain mail* +3, *shield* +2; Spells: *command* (x3), *cure light wounds* (x2), *light* (x2); *find traps*, *hold person*, *know alignment*, *resist fire*, *silence 15' radius* (x2); *animate dead*, *continual light*, *dispel magic* (x2), *prayer*; *cure serious wounds* (x2), *protection from good 10' radius*; *flame strike* (x2); *heal*

Kansaldi rides Ignia, an average old red dragon. Ignia is as intelligent as Kansaldi, and Kansaldi normally takes no action without discussing it with Ignia. Ignia is quite capable of abandoning Kansaldi if she considers it necessary to save herself.

Ignia (red dragon): AC -1; MV 9"/24"; HD 10; hp 60; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/3d10; THAC0 10; SA *breath weapon*, spells; AL LE; Spells: *charm person*, *sleep*; *stinking cloud*, *invisibility*; *dispel magic*, *slow*

Kansaldi's second-in-command is Maquar Lorgriss, a human mage. Maquar is a dark, thin, quiet man who feels more comfortable taking orders than giving them. He is a highly competent mage and privately wants to see Ascania's lab, to find out how she can turn draconians back into dragons (which he personally thinks is impossible).

Maquar: AC 6; MV 12" ; MU 11; hp 31; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (*dagger* +2); THAC0 16; S 10; I 17, W 11, Cn 13, D 12, Ch 10; SA spells: AL LE; *bracers* AC 6, nine scrolls of *invisibility*

Maquar's spell book includes *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *feather fall*, *light*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *unseen servant*; in *visibility*, *levitate*, *stinking cloud*, *web*; *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *fly*, *phantasmal force*, *slow*; *dig*, *dimension door*, *hallucinatory terrain*, *minor globe of invulnerability*; *cone of cold*, *hold monster*, and *transmute rock to mud*.

Maquar's mount is Cauterus, an average adult red dragon. Cauterus is a savage, vicious dragon who likes nothing better than to burn humans and buildings.

Cauterus: AC -1; MV 9"/24"; HD 10; hp 50; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/3d10; THAC0 10; SA *breath weapon*, spells; AL LE; Spells: *enlarge*, *magic missile*; *continual light*, *stinking cloud*; *protection from normal missiles*.

Kansaldi also has the assistance of K'tailin, a shadow-demon, which she called into her service. She uses K'tailin as a spy and messenger and does not risk K'tailin unnecessarily, as she finds it far too useful.

K'tailin (shadow demon): AC 9, 5, or 1; MV 12"/18"; HD 7+3; hp 47; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d6/1d6; THAC0 13 (or 12 or 11, depending on lighting); SA *darkness 10' radius*, *fear*, *magic jar*; SD immune to *fear*, *cold*, and *lightning*, more powerful in shadow; AL NE

Four Auraks provide Kansaldi's force with effective sorcery. Flheer is the most competent Aurak. It is glossy-skinned and very strong, and has a good selection of spells. It dislikes humans, considering itself far superior, and has plans to kill Kansaldi given the slightest provocation. However, it feels Ascania's project is barbaric, and it will do everything it can to prevent it.

Flheer (Aurak): AC 0; MV 15" ; HD 8; hp 44; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2/1d8+2; THAC0 12; SA spells, *suggestion*, *mind control*, *breath weapon*; SD *dimension door*, *polymorph self* *invisibility*, *change self*, *detect invisible*; AL LE; Spells: *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *ESP invisibility* *lightning bolt*, *fireball*, *fear*, *wall of fire*

Sorghriss is the oldest Aurak, showing scars from battles in the War of the Lance. It despises the bullying Flheer, and looks down with some amusement on the other two Auraks. Sorghriss is only interested in survival and a quiet life. However, it will not abandon its friends or fail to do its duty.

Sorghriss (Aurak): AC 0; MV 15" ; HD 8; hp 42; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2/1d8+2; THAC0 12; SA spells, *suggestion*, *mind control*, *breath weapon*; SD *dimension door*, *polymorph self* *invisibility*, *change self* *detect invisible*; AL LE. Spells: *charm person*, *magic missile*, *knock*, *stinking cloud*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *dig*, *minor globe of invulnerability*

Killmhr is a gung-ho Aurak who considers killing enemies of Takhisis a divine duty. It considers Ascania to be an abomination who must be exterminated as soon as possible. Killmhr enjoys action, and will chafe at any delay.

Killmhr (Aurak): AC 0; MV 15"; HD 8; hp 52; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2/1d8+2; THAC0 12; SA spells, *suggestion*, *mind control*, *breath weapon*; SD *dimension door*, *polymorph self* *change self* *invisibility* *detect invisible*; AL LE; Spells: *magic missile*, *sleep*, *stinking cloud*, *levitate*, *lightning bolt*, *fireball*, *ice storm*, *wall of fire*

Jlydd is frightened; it was previously a guard that had avoided action, and it has never been involved in anything like this before. It is afraid it will get hurt. Metallic dragons are dangerous! There is a good chance that Jlydd will desert and run, if the battle goes against Kansaldi's force.

Jlydd (Aurak): AC 0; MV 15"; HD 8; hp 44; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2/1d8+2; THAC0 12; SA spells, *suggestion*, *mind control*, *breath weapon*; SD *dimension door*, *polymorph self*, *change self* *invisibility* *detect invisible*; AL LE; Spells: *feather fall*, *magic missile*; *darkness 15' radius*, *stinking cloud*; *fly lightning bolt*; *dig*, *wall of fire*



The muscle in the force is provided by a gang of trolls, led by Grol-and-Rok, a giant two-headed troll. Grol, the left-hand head, is an intelligent, cultured person (for a troll) who prefers subtlety and caution to frontal attack. Rok, on the other hand, enjoys fighting and hitting people, and dislikes Grol intensely. The two argue constantly, but both are aware that they have to put up with each other. Rok listens to advice from Grol most of the time (unless they are no longer on speaking terms after a fierce argument). Grol normally lets Rok control their body in a fight, but takes control the rest of the time. Grol only bites if he has to, because he hates the taste of uncooked meat. Rok considers him a wimp.

Grol-and-Rok: AC 2 (chain mail); MV 12"; HD 10; hp 67; #AT 4; Dmg 1d61d6/1d10/1d10; THAC0 10; SA NIL; SD regenerates 1 point/round; AL CE

The ten lesser trolls obey Rok (or if they need to, Grol) in all things. They have little respect for Grol, but they know that if they insult Grol, Rok will take it personally and lash out. The last troll to make this mistake took nearly 24 hours to *regenerate* the damage.

Ten trolls: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 6+6; hp 44; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/2d6; SA nil; SD regenerate 3 points/round; AL CE

Running The scenario

This is a complex scenario, with five forces in conflict—Ascania's people, the Knights, the Dragonarmy force, the Sivaks, and the adventurers. The scenario has no set pattern; the precise course of events will depend on the actions of the PCs.

If the PCs try to spy on Stormhead, they must first avoid Kowl and Tabitha. If they avoid the watchers, they may not realize that Ascania in her human form is the dragon. The DM should give them hints as to what is going on (for instance by letting them overhear a conversation about the project), but should not automatically give them the full story. On the other hand, the DM should try to dis-

suade them from attacking Ascania and her people, by showing that the situation is more complex than it first appears. Work on the curiosity of the players.

Eventually the party will either be captured or make peaceful contact with Ascania. They will then get involved in tracking down the saboteur. At first, the PC themselves are likely to be prime suspects; this should inspire the players to get involved. The Sivaks provide a useful red herring. Also, any powerful and trustworthy mages in the party may be invited by Ascania to join the project.

The party should not easily identify the saboteur, Kalro. He will not have perfect alibis for his actions, but he will use his magic and skills to avoid detection. Only clever actions by the party should catch him. If so, he will try to escape either in gaseous form or by flying to join Kansaldi. His ESP power means he will spot anyone getting suspicious of him; he will try to ensure that that person will die. The DM should try to make the party suspicious of other people, such as Sqruiult and Tharra.

Soon after the PCs reach Stormhead, the Knights will be seen approaching (probably by Kowl). Douglas wishes to win glory; the PCs will have trouble persuading him of the truth of the situation. Gwyn may be easier to convince and more willing not to view things in black and white terms, but she will need some convincing. She will not willingly disobey direct orders from Douglas, but will do her best to persuade him not to take foolish actions. On the other hand, if the party can show Douglas a more suitable target, he will give his support to the party (but he will still distrust Ascania and her group).

When Kansaldi's force arrives, it will camp on the plain below the volcano for the night before it attacks. The party may try to spy on them or attack them there. Kansaldi will send K'tailin to watch the crater and give warning of any such action, therefore the PCs are likely to be ambushed. If they avoid K'tailin, the scouts should learn about the personalities of the force, which information they might be able to put to good use (for example by making Grol and Rok argue).

Kansaldi will not attack the crater

openly. Instead, she and the Auraks (one *shapechanged* into Maquar's form) will approach the crater under a flag of truce, while *invisible* trolls and dragons approach secretly. Ignia will start the attack by breathing on the best available target; she will then collect Kansaldi while the trolls free the Sivaks and attack the mages. The attackers will use their abilities and spells to best advantage.

If the Sivaks are freed, some go to join Kansaldi, while others flee. If the trolls free the Sivaks, all but 2d6 Sivaks fight for Kansaldi. Otherwise, only 20 of them join her.

The experiment

For Ascania to complete the experiment, she and Sqruiult must both survive the battle with Kansaldi. They must have at least 25 living Sivaks and a lab that suffered no more than 120 points of damage during the battle. They will then use a variant of the *polymorph other* spell and a magical liquid to attempt to convert 25 Sivaks into one silver dragon.

The experiment will fail.

There is a basic flaw in Ascania's theory of magic: there is actually no way that the draconians can be changed into dragons. When Ascania realizes it is impossible, Ascania changes to her dragon form and destroys the Sivaks to put them out of their misery. Then she throws herself into the volcano. The DM should strive to give emotional weight to this: This is not just another death, but the loss of a great intellect and a heroic individual.

This scenario should carry an air of tragedy; try as they might, the characters cannot return Ascania's children to her. Behind this tragedy is the deeper tragedy of the draconians themselves, creatures twisted from their true forms into darkness. At the end of the scenario, the party may well feel that their efforts have been for nothing. Even high-level characters should fail sometimes.

Of course, they are unlikely to have failed totally. They have destroyed a powerful force from the Red Dragonarmy, greatly reducing its power. But this should be overshadowed by the death of Ascania.

Under Sanction

Overview

"Under Sanction" is an adventure designed for three to five adventurers of character levels five to seven. Although specifically designed for the world of Krynn and its environs, enterprising DMs should find the scenario easily adaptable to almost any AD&D® game milieu.

During the adventure, the party members must make their way to the central spires of Sanction, where they encounter the mythical shadow people and become embroiled in an epic struggle beneath the surface of the Earth.

The Dungeon Master's Guide, *Players Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, *FIEND FOLIO*® tome, and the *DRAGONLANCE*® *Adventures* book are all necessary for play. *Unearthed Arcana* and the *Dungeoneers* and *Wilderness Survival Guides* are not necessary, but may be used as desired. Additionally, the adventure includes an optional section calling for use of the BATTLESYSTEM™ combat supplement.

Background

In a complex cave network below the city of Sanction, there dwells an ancient race of humanoids known only as the shadow people. On Krynn, the shadow people are usually regarded as creatures of mythic legend. Kender mothers love to scare their mischievous children with tales of the shadow people and their wicked deeds, while drunken hermits are often heard spouting wild tales of a vast underground shadow people kingdom, replete with a fabulous treasure.

The real shadow people, however, are a generally benevolent and inauspicious people, reveling in their privacy and enjoying the independence and solitude provided them by their legendary world status. For the last several centuries, the shadow people have gone to great lengths to prevent the peoples of Krynn from uncovering their presence in order to preserve this state of isolation. From time to time, a lone adventurer may stumble upon their caves, or a wizened sage may uncover some traces of their civilization in ancient chronicles, but no one has ever

revealed the existence of the shadow people to the world in general.

The shadow people have but one friend among the "Outsiders" (as they tend to refer to the rest of the world's population)—NoDen Silverfoot, a worldly mage and wizard of the Red Robes. NoDen happened to come across an ancient history describing the civilization of the shadow people, and which also provided exact instructions on how to reach their caves. When the wizard traveled to Sanction to investigate, he managed to win the creatures' friendship through a series of magical labors performed for the Grok (king) of the shadow people.

Recently, the shadow people called upon their surface-dwelling friend to help them deal with the most trying crisis their people have ever faced. The recent openings of volcanic fissures and vents in the mountains on the outskirts of Sanction have begun to flood the lower caves beneath the city with hot magma. These caves were formerly inhabited by the dreaded jarak-sinn, a vile race of lizard creatures devoted to the worship of Chemosh, lord of the undead. Now the jarak-sinn are looking for a new home. They have begun waging an ah-out campaign to eliminate the shadow people from the ever-decreasing caves. The lizards are led by their master, Deathrip, one of Chemosh's knights. NoDen is too old to be of much personal use to his friends, but he and the Grok have reluctantly drafted a plan to recruit a party of powerful human adventurers to come to the aid of the cave dwellers.

Chronology

"Under Sanction" takes place a short time after the War of the Lance, some 360 years after the Great Cataclysm.

Major NPCs

NODEN SILVERFOOT

(9th-level human Wizard of the Red Robes/7th-level thief)

AC 7; MV 12"; hp 36; S 9 I 17 W 14 D 16
Cn 11 Ch 14; #AT 1; Dmg as per bare

hands; THAC0 19; AL LN; NoDen owns a ring of protection +1, and three potions of deep sleep (see Encounter One)

Spells:

1st Level: *comprehend languages*, *feather fall*, *light*, *read magic*

2d Level: *detect evil*, *pyrotechnics* (x2)

3d Level: *blink*, *gust of wind*, *slow*

4th Level: *fear*, *wizard eye*

5th Level: *transmute rock to mud*

NoDen Silverfoot is a charming old man, hailing from western Solamnia. After spending much of his youth as a street orphan, NoDen was taken on as an apprentice at the age of 13 by a high-ranking wizard of the Red Robes.

NoDen is currently embarked upon a quest to travel the world in search of knowledge. Whenever possible, he prefers to travel in some sort of disguise, masking his true nature.

Ever-perched upon NoDen's shoulder is a magnificent owl, Enderborne, which serves as his familiar.

SKEECH

(6th-level human thief)

AC 5; MV 9"; hp 32; S 11 I 14 W 9 D 17
Cn 15 Ch 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (+1); THAC0 19; AL CE; Skeeche wears leather armor under his dark robes, and carries a dagger +1.

Skeeche is the shifty owner and operator of a traveling menagerie and sideshow that passes through Sanction, Thakar, and Khuri-Khan. Although he often acts the part of a charming and harmless showman, Skeeche is actually a scheming and mischievous profiteer, always on the lookout for a new foolproof scam.

The adventurers meet Skeeche in Encounter Two. The mustachioed showman wears a long black cloak and a high felt top hat. Make sure to describe Skeeche to the players when their characters first encounter him. His wardrobe is an important clue that they will need to complete the adventure.



Skeech's Thugs

(2d-level human fighters)

AC 5; MV 9"; hp 14; S 13 I 10 W 10 D 12
Cn 12 Ch 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0
20; AL CE

Skeech keeps 15 of these "personal aides" on his payroll. They are just as dishonest and greedy as their employer.

Deathtrip

(Shadow Demon)

AC 9/5/1; MV 12"; HD 7+3; hp 45;
#AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d6/1d6; THAC0 13;
SA see *FIEND FOLIO*® tome, pg. 78; AL
CE

Deathtrip is one of Chemosh's appointed leaders of the jarak-sinn that dwell beneath Sanction. Deathtrip wears the *amulet of Chemosh*, which enables him to animate the corpses of those interred in the burial caves beneath the city, so they can pay homage to his master. For specific details on the *amulet*, see Encounter Nine.

The Shadow People

AC 2; MV 12"/18"; HD 3+1; #AT 1;
Dmg 1d8; THAC0 16; SA ESP see
DRAGONLANCE® *Adventures*, pg. 77;
AL N(G)

The shadow people are a generally benevolent and private race, dwelling in the upper caverns beneath the city of Sanction. They communicate with one another and outsiders by telepathy; in addition to their powers and abilities outlined on page 77 of *DRAGONLANCE*® *Adventures*, the shadow people have the ability to enter a mass mental trance known as *mindweave* (see Encounter Seven for details).

The Jarak-Sinn

AC 4; MV 12"; HD 2 + 1; #AT 3; Dmg
1d2/1d2/1d8 (+3); THAC0 16; SA ven-
om; AL CE

The jarak-sinn are the lizard-like followers of the god Chemosh. The recent

volcanic activity under Sanction has pushed them out of their former lairs in the deeper caves beneath the city. They are now looking to eradicate the shadow people and take over their dwellings in the upper caves.

The jarak-sinn spend much of their time conducting elaborate services in the name of Chemosh, occasionally venturing forth to the surface in order to capture a human victim for sacrifice. In battle, the jarak-sinn coat their weapons with their own venomous spittle, which burns when it makes contact with flesh (add +3 to the damage caused by any weapon coated with the venom). In all other respects, the creatures are the equivalent of lizard men, as per the AD&D® game's *Monster Manual*,

ENCOUNTER 1: NODEN'S PLOT

The adventure opens in a small inn, which can be located virtually anywhere on the continent of Ansalon, depending upon your own preferences or campaign needs (if you do not have anywhere special in mind, the inn is located on the east side of Solanthus in Solamnia). The PCs, weary from their last adventure, have just arrived at the inn in search of meat, drink, and companionship. The inn's clientele seems to be in an unusually festive mood, and consists chiefly of the usual local patrons supplemented by one or two adventurers and a group of traveling acrobats.

Just after the PCs are seated they are approached by a wizened old man:

"Please allow an old man the simple pleasure of your company, my good friends. Would you permit me to buy you a round of ales?" The old man then seats himself at the PCs' table and engages the adventurers in small talk, while signaling for the barmaid to fetch the party drink.

The old man is actually NoDen Silverfoot in disguise. NoDen is visiting this particular inn because he has heard that it is often frequented by a formidable band of heroic adventurers (the PCs). He is hoping to trick these adventurers into accompanying him back to the caves of the shadow people in Sanction in order to aid in the struggle against the jarak-sinn.

To this end, he has devised an elaborate ruse: While he is conversing with the PCs, he plans to slip a small dosage of one of his *potions of deep sleep* into one of the PCs' drinks. After the potion's victim drops unconscious, NoDen, claiming to be an experienced student of medicine, will diagnose the adventurer's "ailment" as the dreaded "cavern fever."

In his assumed role of herbalist, the mage informs the remaining party members that cavern fever is almost always fatal, and that there is no known cure. He claims to have heard from an associate, however, that the mythical shadow people of Sanction have discovered a cure for the disease, which is quite common among their people. NoDen then offers to accompany the party members to Sanction, using the notes passed on to him by his associate to help locate the caves of the shadow people.

Of course, NoDen's entire story is one elaborate falsehood. There is no such thing as cavern fever. The mage is simply planning to bring the party members to the shadow people's cave network, where the Grok will offer them the cure for the disease (actually a placebo) in return for their assistance against the jarak-sinn. The *potion of deep sleep* is exactly like a normal *potion of sleep* save that its effects last for 1d10 days. (For the purposes of this adventure, however, don't allow the character to awaken until the placebo is administered. If the PCs refuse to go with NoDen, then they do not have this adventure and the character wakes up in 1d10 days.)

While chatting with the adventurers, NoDen turns the subject of the conversation over to the traveling acrobats and begins relating his experiences as a wandering magician and performer. He even offers to do a few of his old tricks (*pyrotechnics* spells). While performing his tricks, NoDen tries to slip the small dosage of the potion into one of the party members' drinks (preferably an NPC henchman, if possible). In order to do so unseen, he must make a successful *pick pockets* roll with a +40% bonus due to the distraction of the *pyrotechnics* (i.e., automatically successful).

For the dramatic purposes of this



adventure, the *potion of deep sleep* automatically affects its victim with no saving throw. Yes, all of this is a bit manipulative, but it makes for good dramatics and the players do not really suffer for it. If you have qualms about manipulating your players in this way, you may wish to award them some extra experience at the end of the adventure. Or you could invent another means of involving them in the scenario.

After the adventurer takes a sip of the spiked drink, he immediately falls unconscious and NoDen diagnoses the illness as described above. The PCs will them most likely decide to accompany the mage to Sanction. If you wish, you can play out the party's trip to the city and include a few encounters along the way. If it is a player character who is unconscious, however, make sure that the journey does not consume too much time.

ENCOUNTER 2: SANCTION AT LAST

Read the following when the adventurers finally reach Sanction:

As you come around a bend on the trail, you finally see the spires of Sanction looming off in the distance. All of your life you have heard that Sanction is the home of corsairs, con men, and cutthroats; now your new-found friend is telling you that the city is home to the mythical shadow people as well.

Sanction has never quite recovered from the Cataclysm. Even now the city is in a state of total disrepair because of spontaneous lava flows that come pouring down from the mountains to the north. In the west you have heard rumors that the underground lava movement is so bad that entire sections of the city have collapsed.

Just before the party reaches Sanction, NoDen shows them some fake notes on the shadow people, supposedly jotted down by an associate of his and passed on several years ago. The notes describe how the cave dwellers come up to the surface late at night, while all the humans are asleep, and steal small quantities of food

and supplies from the human inns. NoDen's associate claims to have encountered the shadow people late at night in the stockroom of the Golden Goblet Inn, located in Sanction's southwest quarter.

When the party arrives in the city (around mid-afternoon), they will undoubtedly make their way toward the Golden Goblet. Just outside of the inn they come across Skeeche's traveling menagerie and side show, which has recently pulled into Sanction to do business. The menagerie consists of four large tents. Outside the main tent is a barker who is actively trying to entice passersby to enter. There is also a sign reading:

"Skeeche's Traveling Menagerie and Sideshow. Next Stop—Thakar."

NoDen, who is always in the mood for a good show, insists upon stopping to view the attractions. Admission is 1 sp. If the player characters accompany the wizard inside, you can describe the sights:

Tent One: Inside the first tent is the aviary, featuring canaries, wrens, robins, cockatoos, and other fowl of almost every description.

Tent Two: The second tent is home to a number of small woodland creatures (rabbits, squirrels, etc.), the most exotic of which is an al-mi'raj (*FIEND FOLIO*® tome, page 11). Each of the creatures is kept in its own individual cage.

Tent Three: This tent houses Skeeche's sideshow, featuring a bearded lady, a tattooed man, and other oddities.

Tent Four: The fourth tent houses a number of games of chance (many of the forms of gambling described in the appendices of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are available here). Skeeche himself is almost always found in this area, keeping an eye on the games. As the party members enter, the showman comes over to greet them. Any PC passing a Wisdom Check notices that Skeeche seems to have an unusual fascination with Enderborne, NoDen's owl.

After the party members are through looking around the menagerie, they will probably enter the Golden Goblet, though they cannot expect to see any shadow people until very late at night. The Goblet is home base to a group of wild corsairs. The inn is loud and rough,

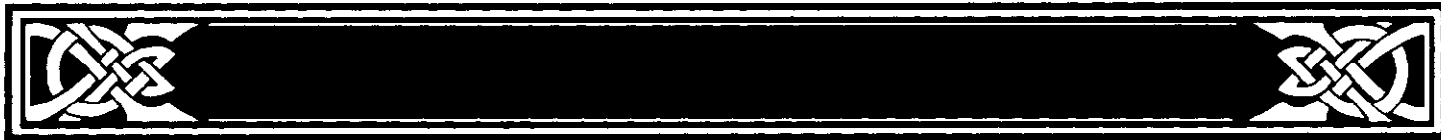
but the PCs shouldn't have any troubles. If you wish you can design a few encounters in the inn or the town to occupy the party members until late at night, when the shadow people are supposed to come out of hiding. Otherwise, allow the players to interact with the inn's seedy patrons for a few moments, and jump ahead in time until later that evening.

ENCOUNTER 3: The Shadow People

If the PCs are to believe the notes jotted down by NoDen's friend, they must sneak into the stockroom at the Golden Goblet late at night to encounter the shadow people. At this point the party members should be in one of two situations: either they rented rooms within the Golden Goblet for the night, or they rented rooms elsewhere. In either case, NoDen suggests that the PCs bring their ill friend along with them so that the shadow people can quickly administer the cure.

If the adventurers are staying in the Golden Goblet, all they need do is sneak downstairs and make their way into the unlocked stockroom beneath the bar. The only problem is that the room adjacent to the stockroom is the bedroom of Rolf, the Goblet's owner. As the PCs and NoDen approach the stockroom, they hear Rolf (AC 10; MV 12"; Ftr 6; hp 35; S 14 I 12 W 12 D 11 Cn 16 Ch 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 16; AL N) lightly snoring in his room.

In order to creep into the stockroom without waking the innkeeper, the PCs must all pass Dexterity Checks (assume NoDen's is automatically successful)—unless, of course, they are using a *silence* spell or some other means of silent movement. If they so desire, thieves may roll their move silently percentage instead of making the ability check. If any of the adventurers fail their Ability Checks, Rolf comes to investigate two melee rounds later, giving the party members a chance to hide or use some sort of magic before he arrives. Rolf attacks any offenders he finds in the stockroom and calls for the town watch (five 1st-level fighters with chain mail, broad swords, and



shields), which arrives in 1d10 rounds. Other than Rolf, the lower floor of the inn is completely deserted.

If the party members are staying elsewhere, they must first gain entry into the Golden Goblet itself. The front doors are locked, requiring a thief or some type of magic to bypass. If there are no thieves in the party, and the players seem stuck for a way in, you can have NoDen come forward and pick the lock. Once inside the inn, the PCs must get into the stockroom without awaking Rolf, as described above.

After the party reaches the stockroom, NoDen suggests that the adventurers all take up positions behind the many crates and barrels. A few rounds later, several of the boxes in the room seem to shift of their own accord, revealing the presence of four shadow people (hp 13, 15, 17, and 20) who have entered the stockroom through a gap in the floor that leads down into their cave system.

The shadow people are not really in the habit of sneaking up into human dwellings during the night. All of this is part of an elaborate show concocted by NoDen and the Grok, the purpose of which is to trick the player characters into helping the cave dwellers fight off their opponents. If the shadow people are approached and confronted in any way, they instantly use their *ESP* abilities to surrender and offer the PCs anything they want. If asked about an antidote to cavern fever, the shadow people untruthfully answer that such a substance does in fact exist back in their cave network. If asked, the shadow people lead the party back into their caves.

Behind the Scenes

While Encounter Three is in progress, there is some action behind the scenes, of which the PCs will be completely unaware for the time being.

Skeech was eyeing NoDen's owl so closely during Encounter Two because he thinks it would be an excellent addition to his menagerie. Late at night, he and two of his accomplices make their way to NoDen's room in an effort to steal the owl, just before the party leaves to wait for the shadow people in the stockroom.

Intrigued by the group's movements so late at night, Skeech decides to follow the PCs and their newfound friend to find out what they are up to. All this time, Skeech is using his *move silently* and *hide* in *shadows* thieving abilities (assume he makes all his rolls), so the PCs do not detect him unless they resort to magic or some other extraordinary measures. When the shadow people finally emerge, Skeech catches a glimpse of them himself and immediately resolves to capture one. Having one of the legendary shadow people in his sideshow would mean wealth beyond his wildest dreams.

ENCOUNTER 4: DOWN IN THE CAVES

After encountering the shadow people in the stockroom of the Golden Goblet during Encounter Three, the PCs should accompany the creatures back to their caves in search of the antidote to cavern fever. The shadow people from the stockroom bring the party members (and NoDen) down into the main entry cave (see the cavern map), where they are met by the Grok, his daughter Wendilla, and ten other shadow people (the Grok's personal guard). As the party members enter, each of the shadow people introduces himself in turn (telepathically), expecting the PCs to do likewise.

During the conversations that follow, NoDen and the shadow people act as though they have never met. At some point, one of the player characters will almost certainly ask about the antidote. The Grok then replies (again telepathically):

"Yes, we have devised such a charm, but why should we share it with Sun Walkers such as yourselves? When have we ever come to ask the aid of your people?"

"On this occasion, surface dweller, perhaps I will make you a bargain. We happen to be in the midst of a terrible crisis. The horrible *jarak-sinn* from the deep underground have recently been pushed out of their caves by the ever-increasing magma flow from the north. They are now looking to take over our own subterranean territories. For now, our enemies

are waging a campaign of border raids and small-scale skirmishes, but we are certain that soon enough they will sally forth in force.

"We are a peaceful people, and not very skilled in the arts of war. I am reluctant to propose this, but in return for your aid in the struggle against these miserable creatures, we will share our cure with your friend. There is but one other condition: That you swear upon your oaths never to reveal anything of our presence to the outside world. Do we have a bargain?"

The PCs basically have no choice but to accept the proposal, and NoDen, of course, encourages them to do so. As soon as they give their consent, another of the shadow people enters with the cure, which he gives to NoDen. The wizard then examines the substance and administers it to the sleeping party member. A couple of minutes later, the potion wears off and the sleeper awakens. The cure, of course, had nothing whatsoever to do with this. The time limit on the potion was up.

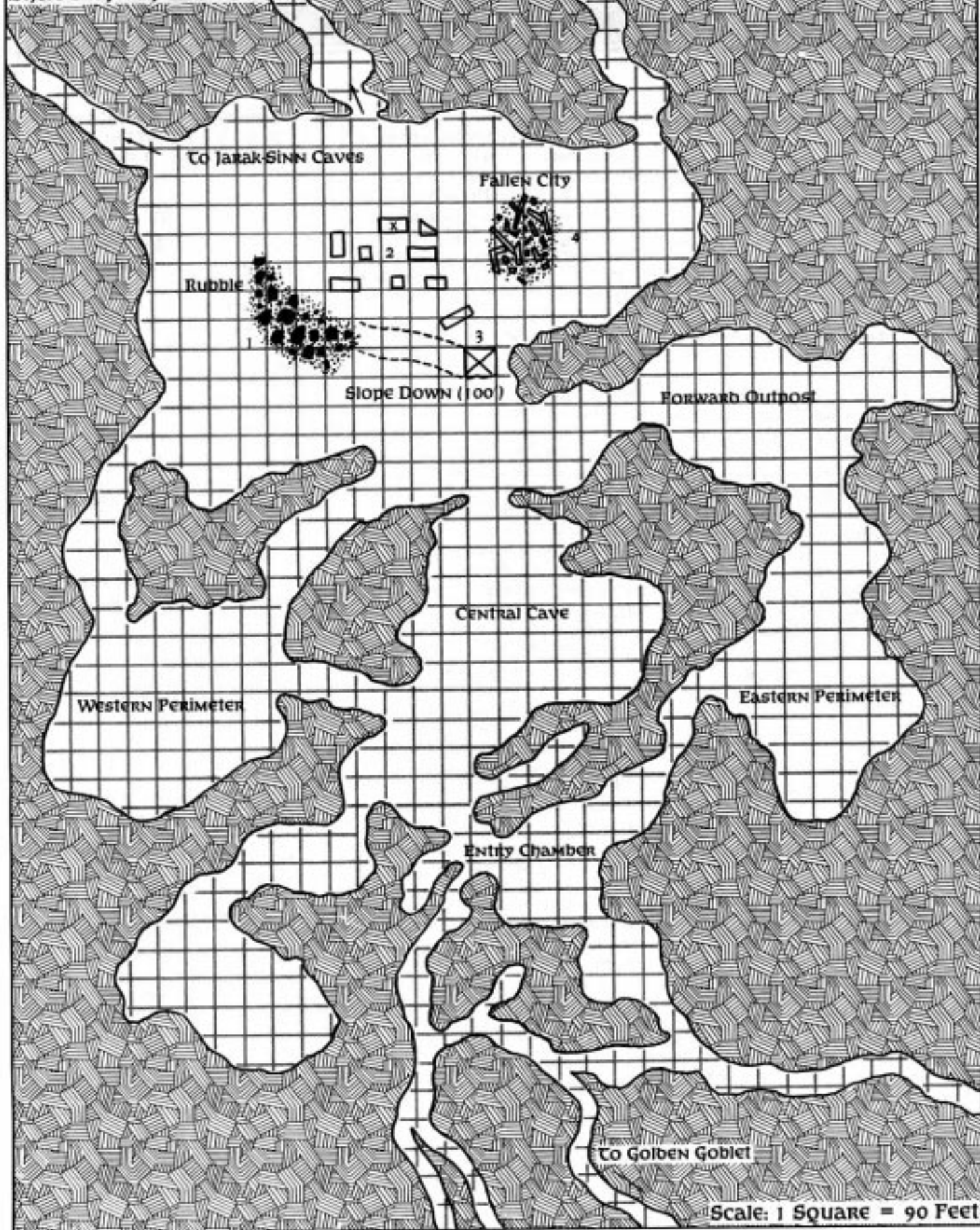
After the sleeping party member awakens, the Grok says, "Now remember our bargain, surface dwellers," and at that instant, Wendilla screams out in horror. Two badly injured shadow people have just entered the chamber. "A raiding party of *jarak-sinn* are overrunning the perimeter in the west! It's horrible! Our people need help badly."

ENCOUNTER 5: RAIDING PARTY

After the injured warriors appear in the entry chamber during Encounter Four, the Grok and his 11 warriors immediately rush off to support the shadow people border guards in the western tunnels. NoDen follows the shadow people as they leave, and it is quite likely that the PCs do so as well. The area where the shadow people are being overrun is indicated on the map.

When the PCs arrive in the western tunnels, they find eight *jarak-sinn* (hp 13, 17, 15, 11, 13, 16, 11, and 12) wielding lances, and mounted on giant lizards (AC 5; MV 15"; HD 3 + 1; hp 20, 19, 22, 20, 18, 24, 19, 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8;

Shadowpeople Caves





THAC0 16; SA roll of 20 = double damage). The lizard creatures are engaged in a fierce melee with six shadow people (hp 7, 7, 6, 8, 7, 6). On the round after the PCs arrive, eighteen zombies (AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 13, 14, 12, 14, 15, 13, 12, 14, 12, 14, 13, 12, 15, 16, 10, 8, 9, and 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; THAC0 16; SA see MM, pg. 103) show up in support of the lizard creatures. The zombies have been animated and commanded by Deathrip using the *Amulet of Chemosh* (see Encounter Nine for details on the amulet).

If the PCs do not go off to fight in this engagement, the Grok, NoDen, and the others return from the western frontier a short time later. They managed to drive off the jarak-sinn and their followers, but they are sure the creatures will be back.

At the end of this encounter the Grok (if the old one died, a new one is immediately appointed), calls for a council of war to decide what to do about the ever-increasing invasion threat. The shadow people remind the PCs of their bargain and ask them to attend.

ENCOUNTER 6: The Council of War

Approximately 175 shadow people inhabit the caverns below Sanction. All of them gather for the Grok's Council of War in the main entry chamber (indicated on the map).

The Grok opens the war council as follows:

"There is little use in dodging the issues, my friends. The latest attack by the jarak-sinn scouts on the western perimeter is an almost certain sign that the beasts are planning to invade in force very soon. We must draw up a plan of action and fight back quickly. I believe that one of the surface dwellers has something to say..."

At this point, NoDen begins speaking: "Yes, I must warn you all. The dead that accompanied the lizard creatures in the recent struggle have confirmed my suspicions. One of the jarak-sinn must have its claws hooked

in the *Amulet of Chemosh*, a powerful charm that is said to have disappeared in these parts many eons ago. I thought I felt its evil influence in these caves. The amulet gives its bearer complete mastery of the dead. You will be hard pressed indeed to stop the invaders while they still wield its power."

The shadow people, NoDen, and (most likely) the PCs should then engage in a round table discussion concerning their next move. At some point during the debate, NoDen and the Grok should reveal the following information.

Grok: "We have 150 warriors, trained and ready, as well as a few special weapons. It is almost certain that the jarak-sinn will attack with between 80 and 100 troops, as early as tomorrow morning. We may be able to fight off the bulk of their army, but the arrival of more of their dead minions will certainly tip the balance in their favor."

NoDen: "The amulet's power is far-reaching. It is likely that its wielder will remain deep within the jarak-sinn's territory, away from possible harm."

It is up to the players to devise an adequate plan for defense. It should be pretty obvious from the information above that the optimum plan would be to send out a small raiding party (the PCs themselves) to reach the jarak-sinn caverns and capture the *amulet of Chemosh* before it can be used to call up more zombie troops to aid the lizard creatures in their invasion. If the players are having a hard time hitting upon this plan, you can have NoDen and the Grok steer them toward it. The Grok insists that any raiding party sent out on this mission must feature at least one player character.

Additionally, the Grok shows the PCs a map of the caverns and asks their advice as to the optimum placement of his 150 troops and five ballistas. Ask the players to indicate where they would like the shadow people troops stationed, and whether or not they have any special instructions for the defenders.

If the PCs question NoDen as to how

he knows so much about the *amulet of Chemosh*, he confesses that he has been known to dabble in magic now and again.

ENCOUNTER 7: Mindweave

After the PCs and the shadow people have firmed up their plans for defense and made their initial preparations (i.e., about two hours after the council of war ends), most of the shadow people begin to cluster once again in the main entry chamber. As they gather, the shadow people link hands to form a giant circle.

The shadow people are gathering in order to enter a mental state known as *mindweave*. During *mindweave*, the shadow people use their telepathic abilities to tie all of their minds together. The creatures perform this ritual before entering important battles in order to enable their forces to operate together more effectively. For approximately eight hours after the ritual, the shadow people all share a sort of collective awareness that enables them to move, fight, and defend in perfect unison. In game terms, this gives the shadow people a +1 on all attack rolls and saving throws for up to eight hours after the ritual is performed.

If the PCs are standing around the entry chamber when the shadow people begin to enter *mindweave* (pretty likely), the Grok invites them to join in the ritual, and offers them a place in the circle. Whether the PCs do so or not, NoDen participates in the *mindweave*.

The actual *mindweave* ritual lasts approximately one hour, during which the participants chant in unison and concentrate. Because the PCs are not likely to be telepathic, they must make Intelligence Checks at a -5 penalty to see if they are able to tap into the shadow people's collective consciousness, thus receiving the combat benefits.

During the ritual, describe to the players how strange visions from the minds of the various shadow people are flashing through their heads. If any of the PCs makes his Intelligence Check by rolling at least five less than the required score (i.e., his Intelligence minus 10), he is able to pick enough facts out of the minds of



NoDen, the Grok, and the other shadow people to discover that the entire cavern fever story was a concoction. This may lead to an interesting confrontation between the party members and the NPCs.

ENCOUNTER 8: BATTLE

At this point, the PCs and the shadow people should have their defenses set up, and have plans to send out a group to capture the *amulet of Chemosh*. Just before the raiding party sets out for jarak-sinn territory (or about an hour after the shadow people have completely set up their defenses if the PCs are not sending out a raiding party), the jarak-sinn armies come swarming over into the areas marked "Central Cave," "Western Perimeter," and "Forward Outpost" on the Cave Map. The jarak-sinn send 30 troops, ten cavalry raiders (mounted on giant lizards), and 40 zombies into each of these three areas.

There are two ways to handle this battle. If you own the BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat Supplement, you can use those rules to enact the entire engagement. Otherwise, the only portions of the battle that you really need to play out are those that directly involve the player characters themselves. If the PCs are part of a raiding party that is making its way behind enemy lines to capture the *amulet of Chemosh*, they must make their way past three encounters from the Battle Encounter table below before they make it into the jarak-sinn territory and progress to Encounter Nine. If the PCs are not conducting a raid, they must suffer five rolls from the Battle Encounter Table.

If you are not using the BATTLESYSTEM™ rules, the overall results of the battle are as follows: Unless the adventurers manage to take the *amulet* away from Deathrip (thus destroying his zombie forces) in Encounter Nine the shadow people will lose. Otherwise, the shadow people win. If the PCs have not yet decided to send a raiding party out after the amulet, make it obvious during their five encounters from the Battle Encounter table that the zombies are turning the tide of the battle and will certainly tip the

scales in the enemy's favor unless stopped (this should certainly send the PCs after the amulet). If the PCs still have not gone out after the amulet at the end of their five encounters from the Battle Encounter Table, they find themselves alone and surrounded by all of the jarak-sinn armies, with all of their allies killed or captured.

Battle Encounter Table

D8	Roll	Encounter
1-2		The PC(s) come across three shadow people who have become isolated and are battling four jarak-sinn and five zombies.
3-4		The PC(s) suddenly find themselves fighting ten zombies.
5		The PCs are charged by three jarak-sinn cavalry troopers. On the second melee round after the battle starts, an unstable vent opens up, spewing lava onto the battleground. Each of the combatants must pass a Dexterity Check (jarak-sinn have a DX of 12) or suffer 2d12 points of damage from the hot lava (save vs. petrification for half damage).
6		The adventurers are attacked by six jarak-sinn. During the battle they happen to catch a glimpse of Skeech and his associates off in the distance, wandering about the caves (see Encounter 10).
7		The PC(s) are engaged by five zombies. On the next round, four jarak-sinn come up from behind to encircle the party.
8		The PC(s) come upon the Grok and three of his personal guard troops, all of whom are fighting for their lives against a mounted cavalry trooper, three jarak-sinn and four zombies.

The results from the table above should only be regarded as bare guidelines for conducting the actions. Feel free to add to the encounters above or improve your own events.

ENCOUNTER 9: DEATHTRIP AND THE fallen City

At some point, the players should realize that the shadow people have no chance to win the battle as long as the *amulet of Chemosh* is still in the hands of the jarak-sinn. The formidable zombie armies that the item controls are just too much for the shadow people to handle. In order to prevail, the PCs must get to the amulet before the battle ends. From NoDen's information in Encounter Six, the adventurers know that the wielder of the amulet is most likely deep behind the jarak-sinn lines. The most logical course of action for the players is to send a small strike team behind the enemy lines in search of the amulet.

Just beyond the central cave (see map) lies a small portion of Sanction that has fallen to the underground because of the recent lava flow. This area has become the adopted headquarters of the jarak-sinn, and this is where the adventurers will find Deathrip and the amulet. As the party members approach the fallen area, they spot one or two jarak-sinn troopers walking about the perimeter. Once the party enters the huge cave that houses the "fallen city," there is a 33% chance that they encounter 1d4 jarak-sinn troopers every turn they move (roll 1d6, 1-2 indicates encounter).

fallen City key

1) Rubble Pile: This is a pile of loose debris and rocks that was produced by the city's fall to the underworld. The rock pile is approximately 18 feet high (the ceiling over the cavern is 70 feet off the ground).

Living within the rock pile are hundreds of poisonous snakes (AC 7; MV 3"; HD ½; #AT 1; Dmg 1; THAC0 20; SA poison bite—save at +1 or 5 points of damage/round, for five rounds). Anyone moving onto the pile, or within ten feet of it, is attacked by 1d8 snakes. Because of the darkness in the caverns, the snakes are very difficult to detect (the PCs only do so if they specifically state that they are examining the rocks carefully).



2) Fallen Buildings: Scattered around this area are the remains of nine buildings, all of which fell from the surface. There are two jarak-sinn troopers stationed on each side (north, south, east, and west) of the building area.

The buildings, once tenement houses, are now little more than crushed, hollow frameworks. Deathrip sits on a giant, ruby-red throne in the building marked "X" on the map. At his feet lie two coffers. One holds 450 stl and three 50-stl gems, the other contains 100 pp and a *peripart of proof vs. poison*.

The amulet of Chemosh is clearly visible around Deathrip's neck. The amulet enables its wearer to animate any corpses within 50 feet of himself, and command them for up to 48 hours. Commanded zombies cannot stray more than two miles from their master. The amulet was given to the demon by Chemosh himself, so that he and the jarak-sinn could animate dead creatures to participate in rituals in the dark god's honor.

When the PCs confront Deathrip, the demon tries to flee to the grave sites at area 4, so he can use the power of the amulet against the PCs. Once Deathrip is defeated and the amulet removed from his body, all of the animated zombies (including those waging war against the shadow people) instantly cease to function.

3) Snake Tunnel: At the bottom of a huge pit (70 feet across) at this location is the entrance to a tunnel that leads right up under the rubble pile at area 1. Starting about 180 feet down the tunnel, the floor is completely covered with poisonous snakes (AC 7; MV 3"; HD 1/2; #AT 1; Dmg 1; THAC0 20; SA poison bite—save at +1 or 3 points of damage/round for three rounds) all the way to the rock pile. Scattered under the snakes, just outside of the rock pile, are 300 stl, a *long sword +4*, and a *potion of extra-healing*. The adventurers must kill at least 100 snakes to get to the treasure.

4) Grave sites: This area was a graveyard when this section of the city was on the surface.

Rocks and rubble are piled four feet high all around the area. Resting on top of the rubble are hundreds and hundreds of tombstones. When the player characters confront Deathrip, the demon flees to this area and begins using the amulet to animate many of the corpses that lie below the rubble. As they are animated, the zombies spring out from under the rubble. Deathrip can animate up to five new zombies each round, up to a maximum of 200.

ENCOUNTER 10: Victory Celebration

As stated earlier, if the PCs were able to defeat Deathrip in Encounter Nine and remove the amulet, quelling the zombie hordes, the shadow people win the battle and drive the jarak-sinn back into the deeper caves. If the PCs fail, the jarak-sinn are victorious.

If the shadow people prevailed in the conflict, the cave dwellers organize a massive victory feast and invite the player characters. During the feast, NoDen and the Grok confess that cavern fever was a fraud. They apologize and offer each of the PCs a reward, the exact composition of which is up to you (1,000 stl is recommended).

Also during the feast, the Grok's daughter Wendilla is discovered missing. In her cave niche in the main entry chamber, the shadow people discover a felt top hat, which the player characters should recognize as belonging to Skeeche the showman. After seeing the shadow people in the stockroom of the Golden Goblet, Skeeche came back later with some of his people and ventured down into the caves. During the battle against the jarak-sinn, he and his followers abducted Wendilla in order to make her the newest attraction in the sideshow. During the kidnapping, Skeeche dropped his hat. The PCs must now decide whether

or not they want to rescue her. Naturally, the Grok, NoDen, and the rest of the shadow people encourage them to do so, and promise a handsome reward for her safe return.

ENCOUNTER 11: Skeeche

From the sign they saw in Encounter Two, the player characters should remember that Thakar is Skeeche's next destination. If they do not remember the sign, and travel to the site where the sideshow stood in Sanction, a passerby will explain to them that the carnival just packed up a few hours ago and headed off to Thakar.

If they set out immediately, the PCs easily overtake Skeeche's caravan on the road to Thakar. Once they make their presence known, Skeeche orders his henchmen to attack the adventurers. If all of his thugs are defeated, Skeeche gladly releases Wendilla in exchange for his own life. He also has a strongbox that holds 450 stl aboard the caravan, which he uses to bargain for his life if threatened.

If Wendilla is safely returned to the caves, the Grok gives each of the PCs another reward (again up to you, 1,000 stl is recommended).

Races of Krynn



AURAKS ♦ BAAZ ♦ BOZAKS ♦ DRAGONS ♦ GNOMES ♦ GULLY DWARVES ♦ KAPAKS ♦ KENDER ♦ SIVAKS



(An article by sage Danliziou)

The dreadful powers of the Aurak come partly from its gold dragon parents, partly from the disgusting sorceries that twist and pervert the dragon egg, and partly from the abyssal powers of the abishai that now squats in the draconian's body. Only a foul black abishai has the strength of soul to inhabit the form of an Aurak.

I cannot say for certain what happens to the soul of an embryonic gold dragon when it is twisted into an Aurak. I, together with other lesser sages, consider that the soul must pass to Paladine. The suggestion that the soul might be damaged or destroyed by the sorcery is quite ridiculous. Only an idiot such as sage Verinioril would claim that the soul is shattered, and a part of it inhabits each Aurak that crawls from the egg. (However, Verinioril's theory would explain how an Aurak can recognize the other Auraks that came from its egg with it.)

Physically Auraks are large, sinewy draconians with golden skin and no wings; from the back of the head spines sometimes grow. Their teeth are sharp, their eyes dark red, green, or black. Their voices are harsh and piercing. I find the most noticeable feature is their smell, an acrid odor of sulphur mingled with their noxious breath, which has warned me of the approach of these revolting brutes a number of times.

Auraks are the most intelligent draconians. They are the least emotional and the most cold-blooded. I believe they have no sense of humor; certainly they do not find even kender amusing.

Auraks are proud of their capabilities and appearance (though I cannot imagine why). Only Dragon Highlords seem able to order them around, and some Auraks even disobey them if they consider orders foolish or ill-conceived.

Auraks are cunning devils, and seldom act rashly. I consider that they are somewhat cowardly, since they will not rush into any action without first considering the risks inherent in it. I have to admit that when they finally do act, their decision is likely to be the best available in the circumstances.

However, a mark of their vile nature is

that they have no real creativity. They can be (and are) devious, but their cunning falls within the strict limits of their experience. For example, if an Aurak sees a spell used in an original way, it will file away the idea and may use it at a later date—but the creature would not have thought of such a use for itself. It is not surprising that they have to steal ideas.

Auraks have few needs. They will eat virtually anything; indeed, I have observed Auraks eat gully dwarves. They will drink alcohol (once they have stolen it), but they have less of a taste for it than their lesser brethren; I have never seen a drunken Aurak, and I hope I never do. Nor do they gamble, probably out of fear of losing. As I say, they are cowardly. Instead, the lazy brutes sleep. Given the chance, an Aurak might sleep for as much as 18 hours a day.

However like all the foul draconians, for an Aurak the greatest pleasure is torture. Making others suffer induces an almost physical pleasure for Auraks. This comes from their abishai souls; it reminds them of the screams from the tortured souls in the Abyss, their home. Perhaps even abishai can be homesick.

Of course, the warped form of the Aurak cannot reproduce, for which I am truly thankful; in fact, I doubt if draconians actually have sexes, though there is a strange and erroneous tendency to assume draconians are male.

As should be obvious to even the most stupid scholar, Auraks were formed to support Takhisis to enter Krynn; praise be to Paladine, that risk seems to be gone. Thus the Auraks have no purpose left. Now, each Aurak is looking for some petty form of self-aggrandizement, at whatever cost to others. Auraks can dream of ruling an empire. Fortunately, their lack of creativity limits their chances of success.

My fear is that if some fool sought to bring Takhisis to Krynn again, as they rumor arch-mage Raistlin attempted, the Auraks would rally to his cause. Then we might again see a bitter war on Krynn.

handling auraks

Auraks are powerful creatures and should make dangerous opponents for player characters. But DMs should not treat all Auraks as identical. Each Aurak has its own personality; DMs should take time to make their Auraks interesting individuals.

For example, think about the details of each Aurak's appearance: did your Aurak's head spines get broken during the War of the Lance? (Head spines do not heal.) Is its odor unusually strong? What color are its eyes?

For that matter, what is it like? Is it utterly cold-blooded, or does it show flashes of emotion? Has it any major likes or dislikes? How devious is it? (All Auraks are devious, but some are more devious than others.) What is its attitude toward dragons, or toward humans? Does it, unusually, have a sense of humor?

Finally, think about what it intends. What are its objectives? Why is it doing what it is? Why is it where it is?

Then start thinking about its powers and abilities. A typical Aurak has a terrifying array of powers. For a start, an Aurak can perfectly imitate someone for a short time, thus enabling it to gain entry or avoid detection for a time. This is also very effective as a means to cause confusion in battle by copying one of the opponents.

The polymorph to animal ability provides the Aurak with useful disguises or means of attack; think about all the possible creatures the Aurak could become, such as a large dog or wolf, or a gorilla, or a big cat such as a leopard. Think about how the Aurak could use these forms, for instance to enter a human town as a large dog, or to reach a victim for assassination.

Remember also that an Aurak is immune to illusions and can spot invisible and hidden creatures. Thus few adventurers are going to be able to ambush or sneak up on an Aurak. On the other hand, the Aurak's own power of invisibility means that it might well ambush its ambushers.

The energy blasts provide two effective attacks each round, combined with a reasonable range. Few Auraks need to get



close enough to let fighters use swords on them. If the Aurak is disguised by *change self*, then the energy blast will appear to cause damage appropriate to the weapon the *changed self* is wielding. Thus if in the form of a sword-wielding warrior, the energy blast will appear to cause sword wounds. The damage will be seen to be energy blast damage when the *change self* ends, thus telling the opponent what really attacked him. The Aurak breath weapon is also very effective, and an Aurak will save this until the maximum number of victims are within the area of effect; an Aurak should also take advantage of its opponents being blinded.

On the other hand, only a desperate Aurak would use its claws and teeth in battle; they are singularly poor weapons compared to its magical powers.

But an Aurak need not resort to violence to obtain its ends. The *suggestion* and *mind control* abilities provide a very effective means of controlling opponents. In corn bat, an Aurak will save *mind control* for the most powerful opponent facing it (probably a mage). *Mind control* could also be used in spying missions or thefts, to make enemies cooperate with the Aurak.

Finally, Auraks have spells. It is likely that Auraks have good spell books: the Dragon Highlords ensured that their servants had the widest available range of spells. When creating an Aurak, decide what spells it has, and ensure that it uses them intelligently.

If, despite all its powers, a battle turns against it, an Aurak can flee, using its *dimension door*. Auraks are intelligent, so they do not normally fight to the death, but rather flee to fight another day if a battle goes against them. An Aurak could make a very effective (and powerful) running villain. Very few adventurers should experience the Aurak death throes—those who do should find it a terrifying experience.

A DM should always seek to bring out the alienness of an Aurak. An Aurak is not just a human in a scaly coat; it has different ways of thinking and has different objectives. Remember that the soul of an Aurak is that of a black abishai and that the Aurak's ideals are those of the Abyss.

Do not expect an Aurak to be honorable, or to keep its word! Remember also how devious an Aurak is when determining its actions. If faced with two courses of action, one straightforward, the other devious, an Aurak will always choose the devious course.

aurak Lair

Total Party Levels: 30 (average 5th)

Total Magic X.P.: None

Monster X.P.:

Kill: 2,270

Defeat: 1,703

Retreat: 568

Set-Up

* As the PCs pass a tumbledown hut in a wasteland area, they hear a voice within call for assistance.

The Lair

Savnhar, an Aurak, fought a group of warriors recently; in the battle it was injured, and needs healing. It found a ruined hut, killed the old woman living there, and waited for a suitable group to pass. As the PCs approach its hut, Savnhar uses *ESP* to pick an image from the minds of the party that they will trust. It then *changes self* into that form, and lies down, pretending to be sick. Then it calls to the party. When the characters enter, it will try to *mind control* the highest level cleric, using its *ESP* to ensure its decision is correct. If the *mind control* succeeds, this cleric will heal Savnhar with his most powerful *cure* spells. If the *mind control* fails, it will try to persuade or trick the party into healing it.

Once it is healed, it will ask—or try to persuade—the party to leave. It has no reason to fight them, and does not want to suffer more injury. However, if the PCs do not leave before the *change self* ends, then it will prepare to fight.

Battle Tactics

The small hut limits the movement and fighting abilities of the PCs. Savnhar first breathes as the PCs gather around it. It then *dimension doors* out of the hut and *fireballs* it; the hut becomes a raging inferno, inflicting an additional 3d6 points of damage each round to those inside. Remember that some characters may be blinded, and smoke and flames make vision difficult—some of the party may not be able to get out.

As the survivors stagger out, the Aurak *changes self* into one of the characters who *didn't* get out of the hut. It then *lightning bolts* the party, followed by breathing again. If the PCs counter-attack effectively, it *dimension doors*, goes *invisible*, and then casts spells and energy blasts from a distance. If that fails, it *dimension doors* again, goes *invisible*, and leaves. The party will doubtless encounter it again.

Savnhar (Aurak): AC 0; MV 15" ; HD 8; hp 8 (47 when uninjured); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2; THAC0 12; SA spells, *suggestion*, *mind control*, breath weapon; SD *dimension door*, *invisibility*, *polymorph self*; *change self detect invisible*; AL LE; Spells: *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *ESP invisibility*, *lightning bolt*, *fireball*, *fear*, *wall of fire*.

Savnhar is a quiet, calm, cold-blooded Aurak with little interest in humans except as useful commodities. It does not set out to kill, but will not balk at murder. Very little frightens Savnhar—except real dragons. It is tall (7'6"), with very long neck spines and deceptively placid green eyes. Its tail is very short, unlike its claws. It despises fools and is contemptuous of warriors (though recognizing that they sometimes have uses). It only shows real respect for mages.

If the party manages to kill or drive off Savnhar, treasure is up to the DM.



Baaz Draconians



Drunken and crude, weak and sadistic, the Baaz were the first draconians to infiltrate civilization. These creatures appear to be men with scaly, patterned skin. Tiny wings bulge from their shoulderbones, and their mouths and noses grow together in dog-like snouts. Despite these features, they can masquerade as humans when well-protected by masks.

The Baaz live riotously, and only relentless discipline can suppress their raucous behavior. Still, this debauchery can almost be forgiven when one realizes how the stronger draconians treat Baaz. In war, they are assigned the most dangerous, least pleasant duties. In peace, their superiors humiliate them with a continuing series of pranks, drills, and inventive punishments. Bozak love to watch Baaz eat "square meals," slide down splintery chutes, and stand at attention while having sewage poured over their heads. This sort of treatment only inspires the Baaz to invent even crueler treatments for prisoners of war and conquered civilians.

Baaz, like most draconians, love strong drink. Indeed, inns became important strategic objectives during the War of the Lance, since without whiskey draconians tended to rebel. Even tiny amounts of alcohol make Baaz tipsy, boastful, and quick to take anger. Draconian males love to harass human females, and drink accentuates this drive.

Despite their lustful propositions, draconians are sterile. They hatch from the eggs of good dragons after the embryos have been corrupted by foul magic, for their essence comes from the Lower Planes. Draconians are the spirits of abishai devils in dragonman bodies. They are Takhisis's method of sending her hordes of supernatural servants to Krynn, circumventing the barriers between the world.

Krynn's few philosophers who have studied this find it extremely puzzling, since, although chaos rules the Abyss, both abishai and draconians believe in strict order. Few realize the truth. Takhisis, Queen of Many Colors and None, is known on other planes as Tiamat, ruler of another realm, in the Nine Hells of Evil Law, a plane unknown to Krynn. Not

even her most devout worshipers on Krynn know this, and draconians themselves cannot remember their origins.

Although the Baaz cannot remember the Nine Hells, they are quite aware of their need to reproduce. Ever since the War of the Lance ended, they have conducted a covert campaign to capture eggs and bring more abishai to Krynn in this form. Even one egg is priceless to them since a single embryo yields dozens of baby draconians. The races of dragonmen squabble bitterly over which breed of draconian should have priority for reproduction. A few Bozak leaders have suggested that experiments be performed on the eggs of evil dragons to increase the number of eggs available. Some sages postulate that spirits of other moral alignments might enter the corrupted eggs of an evil dragon. Thus, neutral or even good draconians might develop. The Baaz dread the prospect of creating new enemies and have vetoed all attempts to experiment on evil dragon eggs.

The mystical procedures that transform the embryos of good dragons into evil creatures also give draconians their most frightening power. Their bodies cannot endure once the abishai spirit has left, and this self-destruction makes them dangerous even after death.

Baaz are made by injecting a cement-like substance into the dragon's egg, and the mortar remains in their system. Normally, an enzyme in the Baaz's bloodstream keeps its flesh soft, but when its blood stops circulating, the monster solidifies. It turns to stone, trapping whatever weapon slew it, continuing to hinder its enemy even though the draconian has died. Fortunately, the mortar becomes brittle as it dries and soon crumbles away.

Times have become dangerous for draconians since the fall of the Dragon Highlords. The people they once oppressed can finally seek revenge. Humanity hunts draconians mercilessly, slaying them wherever they are found. In these perilous ages, the Baaz have finally become influential members of draconian society, who receive the respect they desire. Unlike most of their relatives, they can mingle with humans. They can

spy on their enemies. They can smuggle precious dragon eggs. They can even preach mercy to the people they once terrorized and exploit the rise of tolerance and Neutrality in Krynn.

One sample of a post-war Baaz nest has been described below.

Baaz Lair

Terrain: Town

Total Party Levels: 30 (Average 4)

Total Magic X.P.: 0

Total g.p. X.P.: 650

Monster X.P.:

Kill: 2870

Defeat: 1553

Retreat: 718

Draconians captured the Gnome's Corkscrew Inn early in the War of the Lance, and it became one of their favorite spots. Unlike many innkeepers, Sammas, the owner of the Corkscrew, welcomed this extra business and entertained draconians wholeheartedly. After several months, rumors of a disaster—or triumph—began to circulate. People whispered that Neraka had fallen, the Dark Queen was gone, and the Highlords were fighting among each other. Then the draconians were called away to fight in the service of Kitiara against her rivals.

Riots swept the newly-free town. A mob tore the inn partially down and branded its innkeeper as a collaborator. Thereafter the townspeople shunned his inn. But Sammas seemed to have as much money as ever; few people noticed mysterious strangers, swathed in bandages, peeping from inn windows. Sammas claimed that he had become a cleric out of remorse for cooperating with the draconians and spoke of an unknown deity who granted him special powers for healing burn victims. Since then, several people vanished while staying at the inn, and others reported seeing monstrous beings. Rumors have spread that the Gnome's Corkscrew is haunted.

Actually, a group of draconian deserters live in the inn. Sammas does not dare let them be captured, lest he be accused of further collaboration. The



Baaz know this well and terrorize Sammas by seeing how much they can reveal to his human guests without actually being caught. There are two sorts of visitors that the draconians fear: real burn victims and real clerics. Whenever either sort of character requests a room, Sammas asks to think about it, nervously paces, and then says that he cannot find space.

The Inn

There are only two entrances to this inn building: one at the front gate and one in the stables. A dark, circus-like tent conceals both of them, obstructing traffic on the street. Inside, the few local patrons buy their drinks quickly and leave, trying not to be noticed doing business with the traitor. Sammas is a greedy man, always eager to make more money, but quite cowardly. He has a thin, hairless face with a slick scar, a result of the villagers' wrath after the draconians officially pulled out. There are ten steel pieces, 20 iron pieces, 150 copper pieces, ten silver pieces, and two platinum pieces in Sammas's cash drawer.

By late evening, the only people left in the common room are ten customers, all of whom claim to be burn victims. They drink tremendous quantities of liquor, soaking the bandages on their mouths. They are Baaz draconians. From time to time, Sammas will mumble several bits of repetitive gibberish, look up and say, "prayers," then lay his hands on a "burn victim." As the Baaz become more intoxicated, they will demand free drinks for everyone—PCs included—and Sammas will provide them.

Sammas: AC 7; MV 12"; AS 5; hp 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 due to strength; THAC0 19; S 16, I 10, W 12, D 17, Cn 11, Ch 9; AL NE; dagger

Baaz (10): AC 4; MV 6"/(15" flapping run)/18" glide; HD 2; hp 6 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; THAC0 16; SD turn to stone on death, trapping weapon for 1d4 rounds unless victim makes a Dex Check at +3, 20% MR; AL LE (chaotic tendencies)

Late that night, guests will hear strange noises in the inn: first gurgling laughter, then a knock. One of the "burn victims" has accepted a dare to knock on a PC's door without his bandages. Anyone who investigates the sound may catch a glimpse of a Baaz, who looks like a man in the candleflame, except for his blood-red eyes. When he sees the PCs, he dashes away faster than any human could, his robes flapping wildly.

He runs to the third floor and escapes by gliding down a dumbwaiter shaft. It appears to pursuers as if the creature melded into floorboards. Characters who continue without a bright light (a candle is not a bright light) will fall into the shaft, tumbling 30 feet to the basement, for 6d6 points damage, as described on page 35 of the WSG. In the basement, the PCs see nothing but crates. (The Baaz has glided over these boxes and into the maze described later.)

After the encounter in the hallway, nine "burn victims" appear, properly bandaged, and chuckling to themselves. They ask the PCs why they are awake and lecture on the dangers of superstition. All of them are quite drunk. Then Sammas runs up, chases them away, and flees himself.

If characters try to search the crates in the basement, they discover a labyrinth of boxes. This is the hideaway for the draconians, and five Bozak stay here constantly. They will rearrange the crates to reshape the maze, and they can keep explorers wandering indefinitely by closing off entrances to their central lair and opening new passages to dead ends. Bozak are much more conservative than the Baaz, and they will not confront the PCs unless forced to. The Bozak are furious with the Baaz who knocked on a PC's door, and as soon as PCs leave the basement, they beat him severely. A small window at ground level opens into the inn entryway, under the tent. Naturally, the draconians are careful not to be seen through this window. One of these crates contains 100 steel pieces and a silvery egg, several feet in length, which has been cradled in furs worth 500 steel pieces. It is the live, uncorrupted egg of a silver dragon.

Bozak (5): AC 2; MV 6"/(15" flapping run)/18" glide; HD 4; hp 15 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; THAC0; SA spells; SD bones explode on death, causing 1d6 points damage in a ten-foot radius, +2 to saving throws, 20% MR; AL LE; spells: *burning hands*, *shocking grasp*, *dancing lights*, *web*, *ray of enfeeblement*

CONFRONTATION

If the PCs attack the draconians, all of them hurry to the battle. It requires 2d4 rounds for the Bozak to arrive at upstairs levels or Baaz to reach the basement. If the PCs uncover a draconian the creature will not attack unless molested. Instead, Sammas attempts to assassinate the character later.

Any assassination attempt will take place in the tent that hides the inn doors from the street. As the victims leave, a Bozak casts *web* through the basement window to hold the tent door shut. Another one uses *dancing lights* to create a distraction. Then Sammas spurs the inn's team of 12 horses onto the victims. These animals live in the stable, which also opens into this tent. They have been trained to trample humans in order to fake accidents. Give Sammas a five in six chance of surprise, and if he surprises the PCs, he may treat the charge as a successful rear attack.

Horses (12): AC 7; HD 2+2; hp 10 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6; THAC0 16; AL N

If the PCs survive, all draconians break windows and run away. Sammas apologizes over and over, pretending to have been under some sort of enchantment. The innkeeper proposes to divide the draconians' treasure equally with the PCs, hoping that they will insist on taking all of it but decide not to or kill him. When the PCs leave, this adventure may continue. Draconians from across Krynn will seek the silver dragon egg...and so might dragons.



Bozak Draconians



From the journal of Galf the Hunter:

"If I kept to my better judgment, I would never have given in. But how can one deny the request of one's own brother? Jerrin had been telling me for months how badly his son Pik wanted to follow in my footsteps and become a wild game hunter. I wasn't so sure. True, the boy needed to learn a trade, and a good huntsman is always in demand, but I just wasn't sure if the boy had what it takes.

"But since Pik had his heart set on it, I agreed to take him with me for a taste of the hunters life. Poor boy He was so excited, he could barely speak. Matter of fact, when I told him we were going to hunt lizards, he was so tickled, all he could do was stammer!

"I'd spotted the trail of those scaly rascals a couple of days ago. I told Pik we'd leave early and catch them while they were having breakfast. We only had to go a little ways and sure enough, there they were, scrounging through the brush for something to eat.

"If Pik hadn't scared them off, we'd have had a lot better luck. I only got one of them—three arrows right in the gut. Quite a death rattle those scabies have. I don't think Pik liked that much.

"The other one sort of disappeared. I was ready to go after it, but by this time Pik was ready to go home. What could I do? Home we came, and the boy went straight to his room. Nice kid, I told his father, but he's going to have to get a hold of himself he wants to be a hunter like his uncle."

From the journal of Pik Skiplin:

"If nothing else, I hope at least Dad gets off my back now. I told him a million times I didn't want to be a hunter Like Uncle Galf, but he kept telling me what a good job it is and how rich Uncle Galf and how I've got to get my head out of my books and face the world. What could I do? I said I'd try it if it meant that much to him. He smiled and slapped me on the back. I felt sick.

"Uncle Galf came by the next morning to get me. He said we were going hunting for lizards. Lizards! I felt sicker. I cannot stand anything that crawls.

"We tromped through the jungle for what seemed like hours, following footprints in the mud that looked too big for

any lizard I'd ever heard of Finally we hacked away a big clump of weeds and there they were; I get the shakes just thinking about them. First of all, they looked more like men than lizards. They were covered with metal scales from head to foot. They had wings and sharp teeth and were dressed like soldiers. I think I did what any intelligent person would do in that situation—I screamed.

"Then the lizard things turned toward us and started to talk! That might have been the worst of all. It was some kind of hissing language I couldn't understand, but I knew what they meant all the same. I begged Uncle Galf to get us out of there, but he just notched an arrow in his bow. One of the lizard things got down on all fours and charged us, flapping its wings and clenching a sword between its teeth. I looked up at the other one and it vanished before my eyes!

"I was too scared to move. The lizard thing was only a few feet from us when Uncle Galf shot three arrows into its chest. The thing dropped to the ground and—I swear to Mishakal—the flesh just melted off its bones! Uncle Galf yelled to duck, and he didn't have to tell me twice. The bones exploded, sending fragments in every direction, including a big chunk that hit me in the arm.

"That was it. I told Uncle Galf I was going back with or without him. He wanted to look for the other one, but a bone chunk had hit him in the shoulder and he was bleeding worse than I was, so he reluctantly agreed.

"If Uncle Galf wants to go lizard hunting again, he's going to have to do it without me. The doctor says my arm will be in a sling for a month. If Dad still wants me to learn a trade, I'm going to ask him if he knows any shepherds."

Notes

A particularly formidable draconian, the Bozak is typically six feet tall and is covered with bronze-colored scales. It has the distinctive draconian wings along with clawed feet and hands (Dmg 1d4). Like all draconians, the Bozak is limited in its ability to fly (one melee round only), but has found other uses for its wings. It can glide for a dis-

tance equal to four times the height of the launch and can sustain the glide indefinitely in a strong wind. The Bozak can move rapidly by running on all fours while beating its wings for propulsion. On cold days, the Bozak spreads its wings to increase its exposure to the sunlight while it basks in the sun. On warm days, the Bozak flaps its wings slowly to generate a cooling breeze.

Like other draconians, the Bozak was created by the corruption of the eggs of good dragons, bronze eggs in this case.

The hormones that govern instinctual cycles of reproduction are dormant or non-existent in the Bozak. The Bozak views this freedom from reproductive urges as a sign of its natural superiority. It views the mating customs of other intelligent creatures as quaint at best and as disgusting at worst.

Owing to its magical origins, a Bozak's death is as unique as its birth. When a Bozak is reduced to 0 hit points, its scales, muscles, and organs become dried and brittle; within seconds they turn completely to dust. The bones of the Bozak then vibrate and explode violently, causing 1d6 points of damage to any creature within 10 feet (saving throws not allowed).

No one is certain why this occurs, but it is theorized that the flesh and bones both secrete hormones that neutralize each other while the Bozak is living. When the Bozak dies, the flesh secretions immediately cease, stimulating a surge of bone cell secretions. These excess secretions react with the unstable bone tissue, causing it to detonate. It has occurred to many warriors that the bone tissue of the Bozak could be the basis for an extraordinary weapon, but so far, no one has been able to contain the dried bones before they explode.

What makes the Bozak particularly dangerous is its high intelligence (equivalent to a character Intelligence score of 13-14) and its magical abilities (equivalent to the casting ability of a 4th-level magic-user). Among the favored spells of the Bozak are *burning hands*, *charm person*, *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *ESP*, *invisibility minor image*, *stinking cloud*, and *web*. The Bozak also has a higher resistance to magic than other draconians (add +2 to saving throws).

Bozaks are among the most loyal servants of the Dragon Highlords and are



often used to command special forces and draconian squads. Bozaks expect that their loyalty will be rewarded when the conflict has ended and that other, more expendable draconians will be relegated to menial positions or killed outright.

Bozaks are intensely spiritual and are particularly devoted to the worship of the Queen of Darkness. They have been known to design and stage elaborate ceremonies in her honor, most of which are rumored to include blood sacrifices.

Bozak Lair

Terrain: Forest

Total Party Levels: 20 (Average 4th)

Total Magic X.P.: 6,500

Total g.p. X.P.: 8,200

Monster X.P.:

Kill: 1,271

Defeat: 953

Retreat: 3 18

Set Up

* Galf Skipkin, a distant but beloved uncle of one of the PCs, is on his deathbed. His dying wish is for the head of a Bozak draconian to complete the collection of exotic creatures he has spent a lifetime assembling.

* A small band of Bozaks was spotted in a clearing in a nearby forest preparing for some kind of religious ceremony. If the ceremony isn't stopped and the Bozaks driven out, it is feared that more evil beings will be drawn to the area for future ceremonies.

The Lair

A Bozak priest and four Bozak soldiers who work as his assistants recently set fire to a section of this forest, clearing an area about 50 yards in diameter. They set up camp and began the construction of an elaborate shrine to conduct an important ritual in honor of the Queen of Darkness. The area is scorched black, completely encircled by the dense forest. In the center of the circle is a crude statue of a black dragon made of stones and small trees lashed together with vines. The statue is 20 feet high. Next to the statue is a stone hut about 15 feet long and 10 feet high. This is where the Bozaks live while they prepare

for the ceremony

The PCs can locate this area by the smell of burned vegetation. The Bozaks have surrounded the clearing with a layer of crisp dried leaves. Unless the PCs are taking special precautions, such as moving through the trees, there is no way to avoid stepping on the leaves.

The sound of the crackling leaves alerts two Bozak soldiers on guard duty high in the trees.

Bozak Draconian Guards (2): AC 2; MV 6"/15"/18"; HD 4; hp 18, 23; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 or 1d6 (short sword); THAC0 15; SA spells; SD saves at + 2, explode on death for 1d6 points of damage to all within 10 feet (no saving throw); MR 20%; AL LE
Spells:

1st level: *shocking grasp*, *magic missile*, *burning grasp*

2d level: *ESP web*

The Bozak guards dive out of the trees with their swords in their mouths and glide towards the sound of the leaves. If the PCs aren't in plain sight, the guards land in the vicinity of the PCs and use *ESP* to weed them out. When the guards locate the PCs, they attack and attempt to capture them. They first use *web*, then their swords and *magic missile* to subdue the PCs.

After two rounds of combat, the Bozak priest emerges from the stone hut and races to the battle scene on all fours.

Bozak Draconian Priest: hp 23, all other statistics as for Bozak Guards. Spells:

1st level: *shield*, *magic missile*, *burning hands*

2d level: *mirror image*, *ESP*

"Stop!" commands the priest. He then addresses the PCs. "Are you here to pledge your life to the Queen of Darkness?" If the PCs say they are, the priest orders the PCs to throw down their weapons and submit to the guards. The guards then bind them in chains, and the priest tells them they will be honored by being the first blood sacrifices of the new lunar cycle of the Holy Queen.

If the PCs submit, they're done for. Evil minions begin arriving in droves over the next few hours, making escape impossible. However, if the PCs resist,

the priest orders them destroyed on the spot. The guards resume attacking the PCs while the priest retreats to the hut.

Assuming the PCs defeat the guards, they may approach the hut. The hut has a flat roof, wooden doors on the front and back, and three-foot-square windows on all sides.

The priest had two other attendants with him in the hut. While the PCs battled the guards, the priest ordered the attendants to turn *invisible*. They are now waiting on the roof of the hut to ambush the PCs.

Bozak Draconian Attendants (2): hp 20, 15; all other statistics as for Bozak Guards

1st level: *magic missile*, *burning hands*, *shocking grasp*

2d level: *invisibility*, *stinking cloud*

When the PCs near the hut, the *invisible* attendants glide from the roof, attempting to attack the PCs from behind. These Bozaks first attack with *stinking cloud*, then with their swords. The Bozaks use their *burning hands* and *shocking grasp*, if they can get close enough. They fight to the death.

If the battle isn't going well for the attendants, the priest races out the back door on all fours. He goes about 10 yards, pauses, then races over to the shrine to retrieve the holy teeth from the dragon statue. The teeth are fastened tightly in the statue with vines and dried mud; working carefully, he can only remove three teeth per round; there are 60 in all.

If the attendants are defeated, the PCs may go to the shrine. The priest first casts *mirror image* to create four duplicates, then *shield*, hoping to distract the PCs long enough so he can remove all the teeth. In the event that he holds them off long enough, the priest attempts to flee into the forest clutching the teeth. If not, the priest fights to the death using *magic missile* and his sword.

If all the Bozaks are defeated, the party may search the area. The teeth are made of obsidian and are worth 10 stl each. The priest has a pouch containing four black opals (1,000 stl each) and wears a silver dragon amulet (worth 3,000 stl). Hidden in the hut are an *arrow of direction* and a *ring of x-ray vision*.

Background

Dragons are among the oldest creatures on the world of Krynn, created during the early days of the Age of Dreams. Some believe that all the other animals evolved during attempts by the gods to re-create these magnificent creatures, but others believe them to be the chosen of the gods, a race that is destined to survive long after all other races have perished. Dragons embody the elemental forces of Krynn, reflected in their coloring and natural abilities.

During the All-Saints War, when the gods of good rallied against the gods of evil for control of the spirits of the newly-formed races, the dragons allied themselves with the opposing factions. Black, blue, green, red, and white dragons chose the side of evil, while brass, bronze, copper, gold, and silver dragons joined the forces of good. When the war ended, the dragons turned their attention to the newly created world of Krynn.

In the years 4000-3500 PC, evil dragons attempted to gain control of the regions of eastern Silvanesti, but were driven away by a uniting of the elven clans in the area. Again in 2692 PC the evil dragons attacked southward from central Ansalon. They were once again met by a united front of elven tribes.

By the year 2645, anti-dragon sentiment ran high throughout the lands of Krynn. Humans and elves joined together to attempt to banish dragons from Krynn. A mighty weapon known as the *dragonlance* was discovered by a knight named Huma and used to drive the evil dragons to a negative plane to sleep for all eternity. The good dragons agreed to share the fate of their evil kin and flew to the Isle of Dragons to begin their own long slumber.

For many years, dragons were unknown on Krynn and gradually their existence was regulated to the realm of legends.

In the year 287 AC, the evil dragons were secretly awakened by Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness. At the same time, the eggs of the still-sleeping good dragons were stolen and hidden in volcanoes. The good dragons were bound by

an oath not to interfere in the coming war, in exchange for the return of their eggs. However, the forces of darkness had no intention of returning the eggs. Evil rites and ceremonies were used to corrupt the eggs and create draconians.

Finally in the year 352 AC, when the Dark Queen's treachery was discovered, the good dragons were alerted and declared war on their evil cousins.

Since that time, the sight of dragons, both good and evil, has become a common occurrence.

ecology

Dragons are members of the lizard family and as such are cold-blooded and lay eggs. Their scaly hide, as thick and impenetrable as plate armor, serves as a natural protection against the forces of nature. Because of their great size and power, dragons do not have any natural enemies. Their only known foe is mankind.

Dragons live for centuries, and under the right conditions they may actually be immortal. They are carnivores by nature and prefer their meat alive.

In times of famine, or to heal wounds or sickness, dragons may hibernate. This hibernation, sometimes lasting for decades, is marked by the almost complete stopping of all bodily functions to the point where the dragon may appear to be dead.

All dragons have a specialized organ, located either near their lungs or within their lower digestive track, that is the source of their famed breath weapon. In the case of flame breath, the dragon is able to consciously heat this small organ to an extremely high temperature for a split second, enough to ignite the oxygen in the inhaled breath. Most dragons can fly and their wing structure ranges from that of a rudimentary set, useful only for short distance flights, to fully fledged flying apparatuses with spans of several hundred feet.

Dragon vocal chords are remarkably like that of human and humanoid creatures, allowing dragons to speak in most of the common tongues as well as their own highly developed language. This,

combined with the nimble dexterity in their short clawed hands, allows them to cast spells of a magical nature. Since they are powerful, magical creatures, dragons are able to inspire fear in their opponents. This fear often causes anyone beholding the dragon to be paralyzed with fright or run in terror.

In combat, the dragon utilizes its claws, tail, teeth, wings, and breath, making it an very deadly opponent. Dragons prefer to attack from the air, using their breath weapon or dragon fear.

Dragons possess highly developed senses of sight, hearing, and smell. They can rarely be surprised and can even detect the presence of hidden and *invisible* creatures within a certain range.

Because of their fearsome size, high intelligence, and magical abilities, dragons look upon themselves as superior to all other creatures. In some instances they may ally themselves with humans and even allow themselves to be ridden if it suits their purpose.

Dragons are attracted to bright, beautiful objects. A dragon's lair may contain all manner of gems, coins, magical items, paintings, and sculptures. Dragons collect these items, not for their material value, but for the intrinsic beauty they represent.

Lair

The dragon's choice of a suitable lair has a lot to do with its biological and psychological makeup. Some dragons prefer the cold desolation of the arctic wastes, while others prefer the steamy thickness of a tropical forest. Wherever a dragon chooses to reside, most lairs have several things in common.

All dragons prefer isolation, usually not mingling even with those of their own species. Therefore their lairs are never found close to towns or other inhabited areas. The lair location is always a closely guarded secret.

Most dragons prefer dark caves or cave-like dwellings. Underground caverns, extinct volcanos, abandoned mines, and old ruins make excellent dwelling places. Dragons have been known to enlist the aid of the evil dwarven duergar (either

willingly or unwillingly) to conform their chosen abodes to their specifications. The duergar are usually killed after the job is finished.

A dragon's lair usually has two or three entrances. The first is an entrance from above, through which the dragon may enter while in flight, complete with landing ledges. The second is a ground-level entrance, usually concealed and almost always trapped to imprison anyone foolish enough to invade the dragon's home. The last is a secret underground tunnel, normally connected to the nursery, that is used as an escape passage for the dragon and its young in times of emergency.

The rooms of the inner lair may be connected with a series of winding, twisting tunnels, just large enough for the dragon to crawl through. The rooms themselves, however, are big enough for the dragon to unfurl its wings to their full span and allow plenty of maneuverability.

The main room serves as the living quarters and sleeping area. Here the dragon may relax, hibernate, study, or enjoy a meal of hapless humans. This room is often the largest and most accessible from the ground-level entrance. It is usually designed to echo any strange noises, so that the dragon, even if currently in another part of the lair, may pick up the sounds of intruders.

The treasure room is often located in an area of the dwelling that is not readily accessible to outsiders. The entrance may be concealed, possibly by magical means, and is always trapped. The amount and quality of a dragon's treasure is a reflection of his standing in the dragon community, and the dragon will go to great lengths to see that not even a steel piece is stolen.

The treasure may consist of coins, jewelry, gemstones, gold, silver, carvings, tapestries, statues, paintings, books (both magical and nonmagical), armor, weaponry, and artifacts.

The walls within the room are highly polished to a mirror-like brilliance, either naturally or by the skilled application of the dragon's breath. Nothing pleases a dragon more than to recline on his treasure pile and view the myriad reflections of himself and his wealth reflected in the

polished walls.

Depending on its location, the lair may contain an underground stream for bathing, a hissing pool of lava for an enjoyable steam bath, a waterfall for a pleasant shower, or an icy river to provide a bracing morning dip.

The last and most heavily guarded room is the nursery. The nursery is usually constructed in an underground section of the lair, with a secret passage running through the earth to a hidden escape hatch. Its location is rendered *invisible* to most outsiders, but if discovered, the dragon will fight to the death to save its young.

Within, the dragon's eggs are packed in thick wool or straw and kept at a constant temperature, sometimes with the help of steaming fissures in the earth, to await hatching. When the young emerge from the shell, the room is converted into a sleeping area and playroom for the hatchlings.

DM Notes

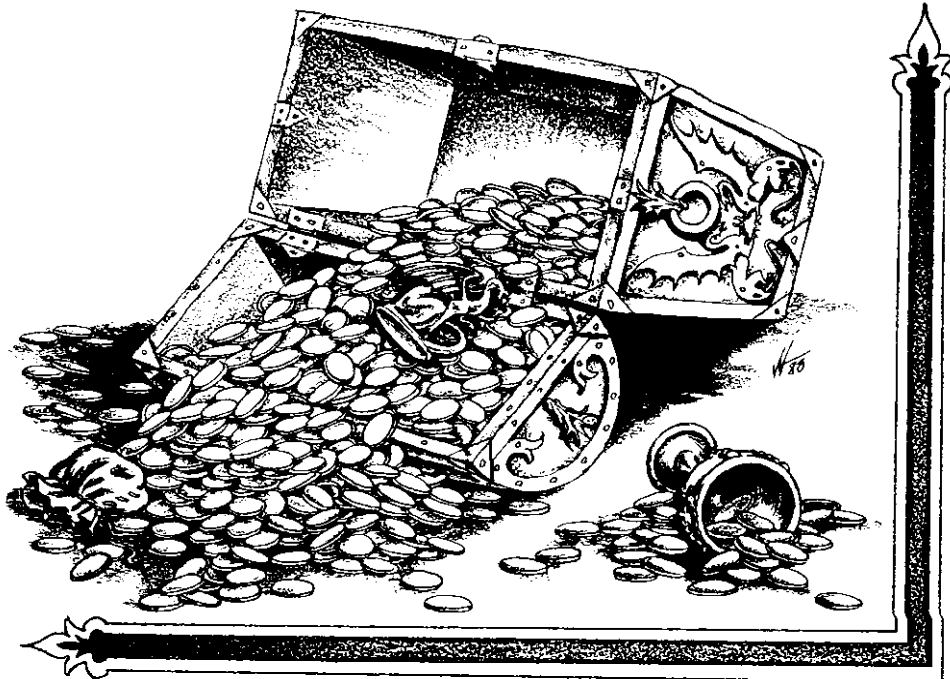
Although dragons are readily aware of their superiority to other creatures, this knowledge does not affect their judgment when dealing with those of "lesser races." In non-threatening situations, a

dragon may act proud and haughty, bragging of its power and great wealth. However, if itself or its young are threatened, the dragon will seek to destroy the aggressor with cold-minded fury.

Dragons as a race know no fear, yet their mere presence inspires a deathly fear in others. They are well aware of this fact, and will swoop repeatedly over their enemy to instill the dragon fear.

In combat, along with their natural fear-causing ability, the dragons' preferred means of attack are their breath weapon or spells. If forced into hand-to-hand combat, dragons make deadly use of their claws, teeth, tails, and even wings. They never allow themselves to be subdued or captured, employing all the knowledge they have learned during their long lifetimes to trick and out-think their opponents. Remember that dragons have had centuries to expand their knowledge and hone their fighting skills. They should never be out-maneuvered or easily bested.

As a rule, dragons as opponents should be used sparingly. Your players should be in such awe of the powers and abilities of these legendary beasts that even the rumor of dragon sightings in the area should cause low- and mid-level characters to seek their adventure elsewhere.





Psychological Diagnosis

"If you want something broken, give it to a gnome," goes an old saying in Ansalon. A better gnomish saying, however, goes: "You can lead a horse to water, but if you can make him float on his back then you really have something there!"

What does this have to do with what gnomes are like? Nothing and everything. Gnomes are always trying to change things in a never-ending quest for improvement. Clarity is not one of their strong points.

As mentioned in the hardbound book, *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures*, gnomes are Krynn's tinkerers. They love technology, and they strive to make life simpler by complicating it with cumbersome inventions. Some speculate that gnomes provide Krynn with comic relief, a desperately needed thing considering the planet's turbulent history.

Though gnomes pay homage to Reorx, there is a cult following devoted to Shinare, goddess of industry. Members of the cult, called Shinareheads, hold services every sixth day. At these events, inventions such as the Steelgrabber (an automatic offering receiver), and the Organizer (a musical instrument the size of a tower that can duplicate any musical instrument on Krynn, and is heard 75 miles away) are used.

The bulk of the service consists of the followers of Shinare petitioning her for more inspirations for smoothly functioning machines. A quick look at the gnomes' inventions shows just how closely she is listening.

At a gnome's birth, the proud parents have a Naming Week, where they announce the child's full name. The tenacious souls who stick around for the whole thing are treated to a grand feast on the final day.

Every gnomeling is taught that the gods created the world, then gnomes were created to add the finishing touches. Each gnomeling attends the Mount Institute of Technologies, MIT for short.

Graduation from MIT is a truly grand and glorious thing. Each graduate receives a diploma courtesy of a Scroll-Launcher, a machine that automatically

hurls the diploma at the lucky graduate.

A month later, after the wounded are tended to, there is a great party called the Gnomecoming Dance. At this blessed event, each graduate announces his Lifequest. Of course, a female gnome is elected to represent Shinare. She is known as the Gnomecoming Queen.

Music for the dance is furnished, naturally, by the Bard-O-Matic, a bellows-driven device that sings a repertoire of three different songs.

Unlike dwarves, gnomes have no real fear of heights or water. To them, the search for knowledge knows no boundaries and no self-respecting gnome would let himself be intimidated by any obstacle.

Role Playing a gnome

One of the questions every DM should ask someone planning on playing a gnome is: "Why?" Having a gnome in a party should be at best a mixed blessing.

To play a gnome correctly all one needs to do is talk very fast, reject easy solutions in favor of convoluted and dubious ones, always try to create /suggest new devices ("Gee, that sword of yours would come out of its scabbard easier if I could invent a Quick-Draw Sword Snatcher"), and have a sense of humor.

One common bond that all gnomes have is a weird sense of humor. Any conversation that is not about engineering should enable a gnome to keep his razor sharp intellect keen on the whetstone of humor. A few puns and practical jokes should make every party appreciate the gnome even more. Telling the jokes in the rapid, nasal tones of gnomekind will put the PC's popularity right up there with kender.

Selecting a gnome name is simple. After the creation of the PC, trace his history as far back as sanity allows. Write down your findings. That is your name. Make sure to have a shortened version (one paragraph long) and an intensely abridged name. The PC should actively dislike the latter.

Gnomish attitudes toward the other native races on Krynn are favorable, with the following specifics.

Gnomes get along very well with kender, provided the latter do not borrow any technological devices. They respect the kenders' natural curiosity and see themselves reflected in this fellow "short race."

Dwarves, in the gnomish opinion, would be perfect if they just "downshifted," a slang term meaning "lighten up." Gnomes look at dwarves as their kid brothers, a view that drives even the most staid dwarf to the point of violence. Gnome-dwarf relations almost keeled over and died when the Grand Council tried to give the dwarves a present. It was a dwarvish version of the Gnomeflinger, but it was called the Dwarven Thrower. The hill dwarf clan's reply was to tell the gnomes to take the device and do something anatomically impossible with it. The incident still has not been quite forgotten.

Gully dwarves, as one might expect, are not embraced as enthusiastically as normal dwarves. However, to the gnomes, nothing is useless, and gully dwarves are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Elves are downright baffling to gnomes. Their shunning of technology and devices is a source of mystery to the tinkers.

Gnomes generally get along very well with humans, but gnomes do tend to dislike wizards. Wizards are seen as lazy, unimaginative folk who "use dead lizard guts and boring chants to accomplish what good, honest, solid technology can do better."

Historical Miscellany

There is evidence that gnomes are not exclusive to Ansalon. In the year 142 AC, a gnome named Tarquinlimbimtimwimberstopftanggeethatsasillynamebutitsthebestwecoulddoconsideringthecircumstancesofbirth sincetheblastedsteamcarbroke downonthewayto theMedicineGuilde forthedeliveryandheyImean thesethings happensoI supposeweshouldjustthank Reorxthatthekidwasnotdroppedonhis head orsomething.. etc., got the idea of escaping the horror and pestilence of the Cataclysm by creating the SolinariSender.



This device was a massive tower with fiery engines attached to its base. Crewed by 100 gnomes, it was supposed to lift off and fly to Solinari.

Something must have gone wrong, because despite the fact that the thing did lift off, witnesses claim that it never flew "higher than a dragon with a hot-foot," and arced toward lands that exist on the opposite side of Krynn.

The most revered military leader of the gnomes was nicknamed Admiral Gnagumoh. He is credited with the design of a sea-going vessel called a Flat-Top. This was a wooden sailing vessel with the masts and cabins replaced by a long, flat, wooden deck.

Six Gnomeflingers were installed at the front. The gnomes, however, were specially trained Military Guild members with another device strapped to their backs, a BirdMocker. A BirdMocker was a set of leathery wings that enabled the gnome to glide and fly.

The career of the ship terminated abruptly when it was lost with all hands (including the Admiral) in broad daylight on calm seas.

gnome Lair—Sink The Buzzmark!

Terrain: Coastal

Total Party Levels: 66 (average 11th)

Total Magic X.P.: 17,900

Total g.p. X.P.: 5,800

Monster X. P.:

Kill: 5,750

Defeat: 4,312

Retreat: 1,437

Set-Up

* While visiting Sancrist, the party hears of a dragon turtle menacing the northwest coast.

* The party, down on its luck, is here in answer to an advertisement. Someone needs able-bodied sailors to help crew a warship.

The Lair

The lair is a hill, hollowed out and made into a village called Wutzup. It is

occupied by 300 gnomes. An odd building sticks out of the hillside facing the sea, with a wood and stone pier adjacent to it. A 100-foot-tall crane of dubious construction is set on rails atop the pier. There is a wooden dock obviously used for building large ships. The dock was built especially for the town, so it is known as Wutzup Dock.

The strangest feature is a steel vessel 400 feet long. This ship is settled comfortably on the harbor floor, 100 yards from shore. It is armed with 10 ballistae and 12 Blamblowers, the latter arranged in batteries of three and housed in curious iron boxes. There are two such batteries fore and two aft. A thick pall of smoke hangs over the ship, apparently from sea water getting into the steam engine.

There are two Gnomeflingers, one fore and one aft. Six ironclad, steamdriven lifeboats have been released, but these have also sunk, their bows jutting out of the water.

The true name of the ship is eight paragraphs long. The nickname is the Buzzmark, since it is supposed to buzz through the murky waters. It was constructed to deal with a dragon turtle that lurks off the coast, most likely placed there by the Queen of Darkness.

The principal gnome here is Grav Shpae, the Master Craftsgnome and leader of the Shipwright's Guild. He and 14 1st-level mates greet the party with the MegaSocializer, a device that can shake hands with six people simultaneously while uttering, "Ahh, greetings, strangers!"

It is not working properly (big surprise there), so instead of shaking hands, it acts as a Gnomeflinger, hurling PCs 800 feet into the air while shouting, "Aaaaacck! Greasy, strange jerks!" After all six hands get a chance to fling, the whole device collapses into a heap.

Grav Shpae, Master Craftsgnome: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 10+12; hp 49; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6/1d8; THAC0 9; AL CG.

Grav wears leather armor and wields a short sword. His disdain of magic precludes his using magical items. He is an excitable gnome whose Lifequest is to

build a powerful ironclad warship.

Surviving party members are asked to help in killing the dragon turtle. The gnomes spurn any advice on repairing their ship, which sank during its maiden voyage. They offer the party the chance to enlist for the second maiden voyage, which will happen once they figure out what happened during the first maiden voyage. A committee is working on the problem now.

That should give the party an ominous clue that nothing will be done for a long while. If the party chooses to lay back and wait, they encounter the dragon turtle on the very first night, since the creature attacks the hill at midnight.

The village itself is an engineer's dream and a PC's nightmare. There is a constant flurry of activity including the obligatory buzzing, clanking, puffing, rattling, and other mechanical sound effects.

There are two temples, one to Reorx and one to Shinare. There are two fine taverns, The Stripped Gear and The Crossbeam's Gone Out of Skew on the Treadle.

The predominant guilds are: Shipwrights, Architects, Mechanical Engineers, Fishermen, and the Guild for Monitoring the Other Guilds.

The gnomes will be of no help against the dragon turtle, since they cannot decide what tactics to use and will be in committee meetings, trying to work out an acceptable strategy.

Dragon Turtle: AC 0; MV 3"/19"; HD 13; hp 100; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/2d6/4d8; THAC0 9; SA steam breath; AL N

This monster carries its treasure inside its shell, fearing to leave the stash unguarded while it goes on raids. The treasure consists of 5,000 stl, 12,000 sp, a *two-handed sword* +2, a *trident of fish command* with a *pearl of wisdom* hidden in the handle tip, a *decanter of endless water*, a *ring of free action*, a *periapt of proof vs. poison* +3, a *helm of underwater action*, a *necklace of adaption*, and a *folding boat*.

If the party kills the beast, the gnomes are grateful. They offer the lucky PCs some of their finest inventions.



Gully dwarves are found in far too many places on Krynn. This degenerate race, known also as Aghar (anguished ones), is a hybrid of dwarves and gnomes, though both parent races deny any connection. Whatever the truth is, it is certain that the race was spawned from the meddlings of mortals and not the wisdom of gods.

They are the scavengers, the street urchins, and the petty thieves of Krynn. Aghar are welcome nowhere.

Gully dwarves are untrustworthy and stupid. It's impossible for the average gully dwarf to earn anything better than a reluctant tolerance from another race.

appearance and growth

Gully dwarves are about the height and nearly the weight of dwarves, with very similar proportions. Adult Aghar range in height from 4'4" to 4'10" and weigh 100 to 160 pounds (those at the upper ends of both scales are rare however). Past that, the Aghar diverge from standard dwarven stock. They are slightly thinner and weaker than dwarves, some even being knock-kneed. The average male has a mass of straggly whiskers. The females rarely grow visible facial hair, in contrast to other dwarf maidens. Their hair colors range through the same hues as human hair. Their skin hues vary little from a pallid color caused by too many years of poor diet and subterranean dwellings.

By human standards, gully dwarves are diminutive and ugly things, mockingly humanoid. By demi-human standards they are little better; to dwarves of other castes, Aghar are the lowest form of life.

Gully dwarves are filthy; most look as though they have never heard of soap and water. They are grimy from head to toe, and most gully dwarves carry a bevy of diseases.

The clothes they wear are bedraggled and dirty. Aghar may be lucky enough to possess jewelry or other finery, but they are sure to wear them in only the most garish manner. In fact, their ill-fitting clothes sometimes make it hard for other races to tell the genders apart.

Aghar breed prodigiously (much to the

chagrin of every intelligent race). The average female gully dwarf gives birth to 20 children for every century she lives. Even with the high infant mortality in Aghar clans, six of these 20 children live to adulthood. Gully dwarf maidens can bear young until the age of 300. Children reach maturity (such as it is) by their 25th year.

Gully dwarves who do not fall prey to starvation, disease, violence, and accidents can hope to live up to 500 years. Because of the odds against their survival, however, few live to be 100 years old or more.

These statistics are unique to gully dwarves—other races of similar potential lifespan breed much less frequently and their children come to maturity at a much older age.

Society

Gully dwarves are clannish, as are dwarves of other castes. These clans form around family groups. Usually several clans combine, with the leader of the most powerful clan ruling all the rest. These chiefs almost always appoint themselves kings of their clans.

Gully dwarves are somewhat promiscuous. Though many are monogamously married (in an informal ceremony), Aghar think nothing of adultery. Combined with the gully dwarves' natural jealousy and greed, promiscuity accounts for most of the friction in clans. Gully dwarves rarely steal from each other, because they all possess the same paltry collection of junk.

Gully dwarves are almost exclusively urbanized. Few clans consist of farmers or miners. The vast majority inhabit the seedy parts of towns and cities and find refuge in dungeons and abandoned ruins. Only there can they eke out a living. If a piece of refuse is dropped in a crowded city square, there's a chance a gully dwarf will be on top of it in a matter of seconds. If two Aghar scavengers get to a find simultaneously, a brawl usually erupts with either the victor or the smarter one palming the prize.

The main occupation in gully dwarf societies is scavenger/laborer/thief (all in

one); 19 out of 20 Aghar fall into this category. The remaining one out of 20 take up the jobs of chieftain, healer, scribe/teacher, cobbler, tailor, tinkerer, magic-user, and assorted more obscure occupations (like poet, dentist, etc.). Thus, a collection of clans may have one chief and one or two specialists per clan. Of all the magic-users (who make up one half of one percent of Aghar society), only a handful know powerful spells; the average mage knows only cantrips, a few 1st-level spells and one, maybe two, 2d-level spells. Clerics are unheard of in gully dwarf society. Although Aghar want to possess magic, few people are stupid enough to grant them their wish.

Because of their poverty, most gully dwarves are malnourished. They subsist on a diet of wild roots and tubers, rodents, insects and—when lucky—a game animal such as a deer or bird. Most go for days with less than a meal per day.

Behavior

Gully dwarves are without the better traits of either gnomes or dwarves. Instead, they're greedy like dwarves and singleminded like gnomes. They can't be trusted with menial work.

Gully dwarves seem cheerful and bumpkinish when encountered without violence. In truth, they are as treacherous and crafty as their lame minds allow.

Gully dwarves are cowards when confronted by anyone more powerful than the average gully dwarf. A gully dwarf clan can be taken over if the chieftain is threatened by a menacing foe. In spite of this innate cowardice, gully dwarves can muster the bravery to attack foes by pitting their large numbers against the enemy's numerically smaller forces.

Many captives of gully dwarves remember their stay in Aghar company as the worst experience in their life. They are subjected to the living conditions of their captors and forced into humiliating practices that only this race of urchins would sink to. Worse, gully dwarves rarely release their prisoners, sometimes holding them for years at a time.

Gully dwarves love excess in all forms: drink, riches, and so on. If a yard of gold-



en fabric is a good adornment, ten yards is better and 20 yards is stupendous. Anything that glitters, anything with apparent value, is beautiful. This makes their homes and quarters look gaudy at best, with ornaments from differing cultures, eras, and social levels all side by side in a collage of ugliness.

Role-Playing guidelines

Gully dwarves act cheerful and child-like on the surface; they keep this up as long as possible. Driven by their greed, they'll try to beg, borrow, and steal anything they can get from characters by pleading and acting humble. They act both curious and frightened at the same time. Beneath that veneer, they are trying to think of a way to better themselves. If they are captives of the player characters, they'll be pondering an escape route. If they are being questioned, they'll lie whenever possible. Their "stupid" act is no ruse: the brightest of the Aghar are only comparable to average humans in intelligence.

DM Notes

Gully dwarves move about in mobs, following the lead of the strongest among them.

When in combat, they use dirty tactics. They'll trip foes and attack them when they are down. They care nothing of honor. If they want an enemy dead, they'll kill him at the first chance. Otherwise, they'll wound them to incapacitation. They are likewise quick to flee in battle. If a Morale Check is between 30% and 60% (not 50%), they'll flee in panic.

Gully Dwarf Lair

Terrain: Urban, Ruins
Total Party Levels: 18 (Average 3d)
Total Magic X. P. : None
Total stl X.P.: 320
Monster X.P:
Kill: 721
Defeat: 540
Retreat: 180

Set Up

The party has made its way into a sewer system within this site. There is filth all around. The area looks scavenged, as if little hands have searched through here before.

The Lair

Sewers can be entered through drainage covers on the streets and through the drains that lead out of the sewer and into the waterways.

The sewers are six feet high by seven feet wide. This is the home of a clan of gully dwarves. Anything that makes its way into the sewer tunnels is eventually spotted by the Aghar. After a day of culling the area outside, they retreat here to spend their quiet hours in the nooks and crannies they've cleared. If a gully dwarf is chased by the party, he would eventually lead the PCs here.

While the characters make their way through the tunnels, ankle deep in garbage and mire, they feel eyes upon them, watching them. Those with infravision can see a party of ten gully dwarves skulking in the shadows. Otherwise, a character's roll to detect secret doors is required to see them. If no one spots the gully dwarves, the party passes right by them.

The sewers twist and turn, snaking their way beneath the ground. Every 10 feet, there is change in the sewers. Roll 1d8 on the following table.

D8 Roll Tunnel

1-2	3-way intersection
3-4	4-way intersection
5-6	bend (PO-degree turn)
7	dead end
8	gully dwarf dwelling

If the characters come to a dead end in the sewers while being followed, the gully dwarves take the chance to attack. Their goal is to take what they can from the party and escape. They flee when they have had either half their number injured, or a third of their number killed.

Ten gully dwarves: AC 5; MV 6"; hp 8, 7, 7, 7, 6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 19; SA nil; SD Save at 4 levels higher; AL CN

If the characters come to the gully dwarf dwelling, they encounter 20 gully dwarves and their ten children. The dwelling is dug into the wall of the sewer. Pots boil, children sleep, and adults talk. Everywhere, their booty is displayed with pride. Ornaments are piled upon each other, impossibly balanced.

Sufficient looting of this area reveals the following treasure: 30 stl, 60 sp, 75 cp, five rings (worth 50 stl each), 30 ornaments (worth one stl each), and one hooded lantern (worth seven stl).

If treated amiably, the Aghar beg from the characters what they can, acting humble and impoverished. If they get nothing, they'll begin hurling stones and garbage at the party, chasing them away from the lair.

If attacked, the gully dwarves defend their gaudy dwelling, fleeing with the children if the defense fails. If the chief is threatened, he calls for a bargain with the player characters and orders his people to honor the deal. They even become willing slaves if need be.

Gully dwarf chief and nineteen gully dwarves: AC 5; MV 6"; HD 1; hp 8, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 6, 5, 5, 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 19; SA nil; SD save at 4 levels higher; AL CN

Ten gully dwarf children: AC 7; MV 5"; HD 1-2; hp 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 3, 3, 3, 2; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; THAC0 20; SA nil; SD Save at 4 levels higher; AL CG



Kapak Draconians



History

Like all draconians, Kapaks are special elite troops of the Dragon Highlords. They were created from the eggs of copper dragons stolen by the evil wyrms from the Isle of Dragons. The stolen eggs were subjected to a special ceremony devised by Takhisis and conducted by the triad of Wyrllish the cleric, Dracart the mage, and the red dragon Harkiel. The ceremony corrupted the eggs into vessels of evil, rapidly accelerating the development of the copper dragon embryos and mutating them into a basic humanoid form. The evil ceremony also opened up the way for abishai of the Abyss to take possession of each of the newly formed draconians, sharpening the creatures' evil instincts and adding a peculiar magical bent to their existence. The corruption of the dragon eggs took place in the fiery caverns below Sanction.

Shortly after their creation, Kapaks and the other draconians became the backbone of the wicked Dragonarmies that swept across Krynn. Although they were usually used as mobile stealthy troops and special forces, many Kapaks served as foot soldiers in the invasions of Nordmaar and Goodlund (348 AC) and the battles against the Silvanesti.

Hundreds of Kapaks survived the War of the Lance and still serve in the Dragonarmies that dominate central Ansalon. Most of their numbers are currently concentrated in the Blue and Green Armies, though there are large numbers present in the White and Red Armies as well. The number of Kapaks still with the Black Dragonarmy is inexplicably low.

Description

Kapaks are large, lizard-like humanoids, usually standing between six and seven feet tall. Their leathery flesh is lightly tinted an odd mixture of copper and green that varies along their lengths.

Kapaks' origins can easily be deduced from their appearance. Their heads are obviously dragon-like, featuring a slightly elongated snout, toothy maw, and horns. Kapaks' venomous saliva constantly drips from their hideous fangs.

Like their progenitors, the copper dragons, Kapaks have a short mane that hangs down to either side of their mouths. A large pair of leathery wings (six-foot span), and a sturdy tail complete their draconian physique.

Although Kapaks have human hands with four fingers and an opposable thumb, they have but three toes. Both their fingers and toes sprout long, tough claws suitable for defense or simple burrowing.

Their warlike nature makes it a rare occurrence for a draconian of any sort to wear any clothing or accessories other than armor or battle gear. Creatures of stealth and guile, Kapaks never wear armor of an encumbering nature, usually opting for leather or scale mail.

Biology

For the most part, the internal make-up of Kapaks closely resembles that of the human norm. Their basic organs and biological systems are very similar to those of an average man. Their strange ancestry and semi-magical existence, however, give the creatures quite a few unique abilities.

Owing to their draconian heritage, Kapaks are very strong. Most are able to lift more than 400 pounds over their heads (18/76 strength in AD&D® game terms, but the draconians do not receive the attack and damage bonuses outlined in the *Player's Handbook*). This physical power tends to surprise their opponents, who are often deceived by the creatures' lithe torsos and long limbs.

There is also some characteristic of the original copper dragons that caused the Kapaks' physical forms to emerge ideally adapted for stealth and skullduggery. Their lithe forms certainly make Kapaks the most dexterous of all the draconians (most have Dexterity scores of 16, but again no bonuses). The scales on the bottoms of their feet form a soft pad, allowing the creatures to move silently with little effort. Kapaks also have a very shallow breath, making it easier for them to remain still and hide from observers.

The only truly exotic component of their physiognomy, however, is the gland

that produces their highly venomous saliva. Although connected to the creatures' anatomy by traditional means, the gland (located at the base of the neck) generates the venom by pure magic (an after-effect of the abishai possession). Its ability to produce is almost limitless.

Unfortunately, the ceremony that created Kapaks did not shape the creatures exactly as planned. Their metabolism operates at an incredibly high rate, making it necessary for the beasts to devour an unbelievable amount of food to keep functioning. The average Kapak eats about 50 pounds of meat per day (Kapaks are entirely carnivorous). For this reason, Kapaks like to consume their foes whenever possible.

Role Playing

Kapaks are, for the most part, rather ignorant, ill-mannered creatures. When it comes to general knowledge and everyday functioning, they are probably the least intelligent of all draconians. In combat, however, they are devilishly clever and often able to devise some sort of cunning scheme to catch their opponents off-guard. This is what makes Kapaks so dangerous—their opponents have a tendency to view them as stupid creatures, only to be caught off guard by the Kapaks' sly tactical genius.

Kapaks are well aware of the advantages provided by their cunning combat instinct. They always try to use these advantages to their full potential. They are creatures of stealth; they prefer to take their opponents by surprise, or lead them into some sort of devilish trap. Kapaks rarely attack a foe that is not at some sort of disadvantage. All of this makes the creatures excellent assassins, and the Dragon Highlords have been known to make extensive use of them in this capacity*.

Like all draconians, Kapaks are generally gruff. They speak in a sort of high-pitched whine. They have a deep appreciation of black humor, which they frequently acknowledge with hyena-like laughter. Complaints about the scarcity of food make up about half of all the sentences Kapaks ever utter.

Combat Notes and Game Mechanics

1) Like all draconians, Kapaks undergo a radical transformation when slain. This is a result of the peculiar enchantment that created the beasts. Upon receiving a deathblow, Kapaks dissolve into ten-foot-diameter pools of deadly acidic venom. Anyone entering an acid pool suffers 1d8 points of damage per melee round. The pool of acid evaporates in 1d6 melee rounds. Any items carried by a dead Kapak are instantly dissolved into uselessness upon its death (even magical items receive no saving throw).

2) Like most draconians, Kapaks are able to run along the ground quickly on all fours while flapping their wings. This form of locomotion gives them a movement rate of 15" per melee round. A healthy Kapak can continue to run at this accelerated rate for 2d12 turns before tiring.

Because of their underdeveloped wings, Kapak are not capable of true flight, but they are able to glide at a rate of 18" per melee round. In order to glide, a Kapak must begin at a height of at least 20 feet.

3) Their rather unique physiques enable most Kapaks (though not all) to use the following abilities as though they were 1st-level thieves: *move silently*, *hide in shadows*, and *find/remove traps*. Additionally, most Kapaks have all the assassination abilities of a 1st-level assassin.

Additionally, there are some unique Kapaks that have thieving and assassin abilities developed as high as those of 7th-level characters.

4) If not using a weapon, Kapaks can bite for 1d4 points of damage per round. The creatures prefer, however, to arm themselves with short swords, broad swords, daggers, slings, or maces. Most Kapaks generally carry several weapons.

Kapaks often lick their melee weapons before entering battle, in order to coat them with their deadly venom. Anyone bitten by a Kapak or struck by an even-

omed weapon must save vs. poison or become paralyzed for 2d6 turns. The poisonous venom only remains upon the weapons for three melee rounds.

Kapaks also frequently wear combat armor, though they usually confine themselves to leather or scale mail. A Kapak in leather armor has an Armor Class of 2, and scale mail reduces the beast's AC to 1. Additionally, if a shield is carried, the draconian's armor class is dropped by another one.

Kapak Lair— Khuri-Khan

Terrain: Mountainous

Total Party Levels: 25 (average 4th)

Set-Up

* High up in the mountains just outside of Khuri-Khan lies a tower that serves as headquarters to the Backbiters, a troop of Kapak draconians attached to the Green Dragonarmy and specializing in subterfuge. The tower is situated in very rough terrain, making it difficult to reach.

* The Backbiter Headquarters is an important terminus in the chain of command of the Green Dragonarmy. Important information, prisoners, and leaders frequently pass through the mountain headquarters; most of the Green Dragonarmy's special espionage and skullduggery operations are planned here.

The Lair

The tower lies at the top of a very steep mountain path that spirals up 500 feet from ground level. One hundred feet down from the tower on the path is a heavily fortified stone checkpoint that is continuously manned by eight Kapaks. The Kapaks at the checkpoint keep all unauthorized visitors away; they are armed with broad swords, shields, and scale mail armor. There is also a single ballista at the checkpoint.

Anyone wishing to reach the tower and avoid the checkpoint can scale the treacherous cliff that provides access to the structure's rear quarter. The cliff is quite

steep and a very dangerous climb (use the rules in the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*). There is a 25% chance that anyone scaling the cliff encounters three Kapaks patrolling the fortress perimeter.

Entry to the tower can only be gained through the main gate, at which six Kapaks are always stationed, or through one of the two windows found on each floor. The tower itself is a five-storey structure. The first floor holds the food storage and preparation areas, as well as a simple equipment warehouse and entry hall. Floors two and three are dominated by Kapak barracks. Floor four houses the keep armory and a prison detention area, while floor five contains the commander's quarters and special conference chambers. There are usually five Kapaks on the first floor, ten on each of the second and third floors, 15 on the fourth floor, and five on the fifth floor. The base commander, an Aurak draconian, is usually found in his quarters on the fifth floor. A group of three Kapaks constantly patrols the entire structure. Any unauthorized party moving about in the fortress has a 10% chance per melee round of encountering the patrol.

The food caravans

Twice per day, a long caravan makes its way up the mountain path to deliver the huge quantities of food needed by the Kapaks. Each caravan consists of eight wagons, each driven by two human soldiers of the Dragonarmy (1st-level fighters). These caravans come all the way from Khuri-Khan. Clever PCs can attempt to ambush one of the caravans and replace their drivers, or stow away in order to gain easy access to the complex. The Kapaks are usually so concerned with getting their food supply that they are particularly vulnerable to such schemes.

Use in adventures

The BackBiter HQ is a perfect area to place Dragonarmy secret plans that the PCs must capture, or the NPCs that the party members must rescue in the midst of an adventure. It was specifically designed for interesting infiltration.

The Kender

It is said that the origin of kender can be traced to gnomes who were altered by the power of a Krynn artifact known as the Greystone of Gargath. And since that ancient occurrence during the Age of Dreams, the kender race has spread (infested, according to some) throughout Krynn.

The most familiar trait shared by all these diminutive humanoids is that of curiosity, and only the most basic instincts for survival are stronger. This inborn inquisitiveness is perhaps the greatest reason most kender have uncanny talents for reaching into the folds of a robe or picking a lock—for the only thing kender love more than a good mystery is solving that mystery. A locked chest must obviously have some fascinating object within, and the same holds true for an adventurer's bulky backpack. Thus, while most non-kender tend to view the race as thieves, it is more true that kender merely are fascinated by new things, and their natural talents are used not to rob possessions from others, but rather to "borrow" them for closer examination at a later time.

The societies of Krynn, unfortunately for the kender, tend not to follow the same philosophy, and so kender are often shunned by other races, despite the fact they hold no prejudices toward anyone. (Quite the contrary, for kender find the customs and habits of others to be quite fascinating.)

Kender rarely dwell permanently with other peoples; the few instances where they have can be traced to necessity on the part of others. (One instance is recorded of a kender village settled above mineral deposits, which attracted a wary—and unenthusiastic—group of dwarves to dwell there for a time.)

Because of the chaotic kender lifestyle, many people have expressed amazement that the kender race is able to survive at all. Sages have termed their apparently instinctive survival mechanism the "kender clock."

This phenomenon seems to be shared by all members of a set community, and triggers the inhabitants to act during the proper times for planting and harvesting, with each kender somehow knowing his

part in order that the job get done. It is this natural ability that causes kender to be so skilled with plants (although usually with crops that require little tending).

Kender horticultural talents account for their only two exports: dew drink and kender pak. The former is a golden alcoholic beverage distilled from sundews, which inns and taverns sell for five stl per bottle. The latter is a highly concentrated and nutritious sweet bread, which merchants sell for an average of four times the cost of a week's normal rations. One loaf, which retains its freshness up to two months, is equal to two weeks' rations and weighs no more than three pounds. (In both cases, the kender who provided either the drink or the bread likely received nothing more than a few trinkets or seeds in barter from the purchaser, for kender are notoriously poor businessmen.)

Nomadic kender travel in bands not usually exceeding 50 souls. Their caravans typically include a number of hand carts filled with their most prized possessions: odds, ends, goats, ponies, etc. Generally, these sorts of kender spend a portion of the year in one place, harvesting wild crops. Then they move off again in search of adventure. Of nomadic kender, 5% may be considered to have the skills of true barbarians.

In all kender society, the family unit is of prime importance. Kenderlings stay with their families until they are around 20. At this time, a kender is usually struck with wanderlust. He departs from the family to seek his own roads of adventure. This portion of a kender's life continues until the age of 50 or 60. This is the age at which a kender enters his last stage, that of "Rooting." This is not entirely an end of wandering for the kender, but rather is a time for responsibility. A time to settle with another kender and raise a kenderling or two.

Seldom do kender have more than two offspring, and the second is never born until the first is stricken with wanderlust. Thus, each kenderling is afforded the undivided attention of his parents.

Each community of rooted kender has holidays corresponding to local customs,

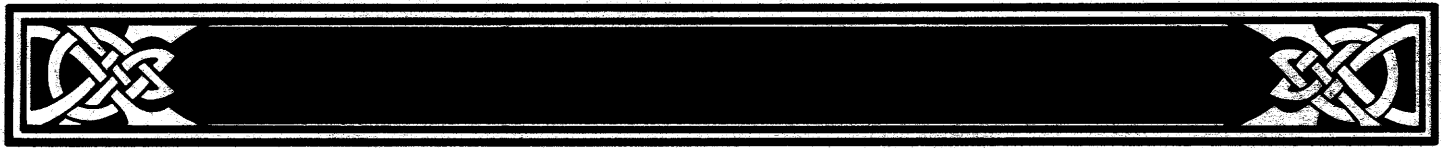
religious festivals, and natural phenomena. One custom of interest is what is known as the "Kendermeet." These are semi-scheduled events that take place at set spots between two villages in an area favored by kender—pleasant groves or meadows, for example. Any time more than two kender from neighboring communities come together here, the event is considered to be a kendermeet. Business and other matters of importance are conducted at these meetings, along with much exchanging of items and banqueting (if large groups are present). The spot at which these events take place is known as a "Kender garden." Anyone is welcome to attend, although few non-kender wish to risk it.

One of the largest groups of rooted kender resides in the city of Kendermore, near the southern shores of the Blood Sea. It is not a typical city; the lack of commercial buildings is immediately apparent. And since it is mostly residential, Kendermore holds little of interest to non-kender, although it is rumored that relics from The Ruins occasionally turn up on a mantle. In connection with this, however, there is no record of anyone ever getting out of Kendermore with any true treasure. In fact, no records exist of anyone leaving the area with even their own treasure intact!

Kender Possessions

Kender always travel with their most valued possessions safely tucked away in packs or sacks. To compensate for this load, kender normally prefer light clothes, such as a leather jerkin or outfits of light fur. No less than the remaining three-quarters of allowable encumbrance is taken up by mostly valueless odds and ends and a home-made set of thieves' tools (for those kender with thieving skills).

No clear list could be made to cover the different sorts of objects a kender might covet. Anything reasonably small, attractive, or odd is likely to draw the kender's interest. This object can be acquired by him without making a *pick pockets* roll if it is not already in possession of another character and the kender wins initiative.



Otherwise, the kender must rely on his skills to accomplish the task—and face the possible repercussions if his actions are not appreciated.

If at any time the kender's encumbrance exceeds the maximum allowed, he begins to cross off items possessed, starting with the ones owned longest, until allowable encumbrance is reached. Note that a minor degree of logic can be used to alter this rule. A kender aware that he holds a magical object, for instance, would likely keep it rather than drop it to take an interesting stone.

The Kender Lair

By now it is probably clear that the kender lair is usually carried with the kender. But for those occasions when someone explores the home of a rooted kender, the interior is comfortable, with stuffed cushions and heavy, stout furniture. No locks will be found anywhere (unless a part of an acquired knick-knack made by a non-kender), and the interior is clean and well kept.

Small items in the house, of course, will likely vary from day to day. These will always include objects of bright color and little function.

The building materials for kender homes include whatever is handy; quite a few folk have remarked about the kender talent for taking a conglomeration of natural stone, wood, or brick and turning it into a pleasant habitation.

Kender in The Campaign

Kender are by far the most difficult characters to play in Krynn, simply because adventuring for gain is not a part of their mindset—a virtual anathema to the traditional thinking of other classes. And so in a number of campaigns, the DM may find kender fit best as NPCs to find secret doors or just to possess objects the party requires at critical times.

But if kender are used as player characters, the DM should keep an eye out to see that the PC is played properly. And should circumstances arise in which he feels the character is hording a valuable object in an un-kenderlike fashion, he

may resort to the following table to see whether the kender will part with it during the normal course of events.

Base chance of kender's parting with an object: 25%

Cumulatively modified by:

Kender is aware object is magical: -25%

Kender is aware object is of great practical use to him (magical dagger, *ring of protection*, etc.): -40%

Kender knows object has high value apart from being magical: -10%

Object was given to kender by someone he loves: -60%

Kender exceeds allowed encumbrance: +5%

Kender has possessed object longer than—a week: +10%

a month: +20%

a year: +50%

Replacement item is "neat" (shiny, flashing colors, strange knobs, etc.): +50%

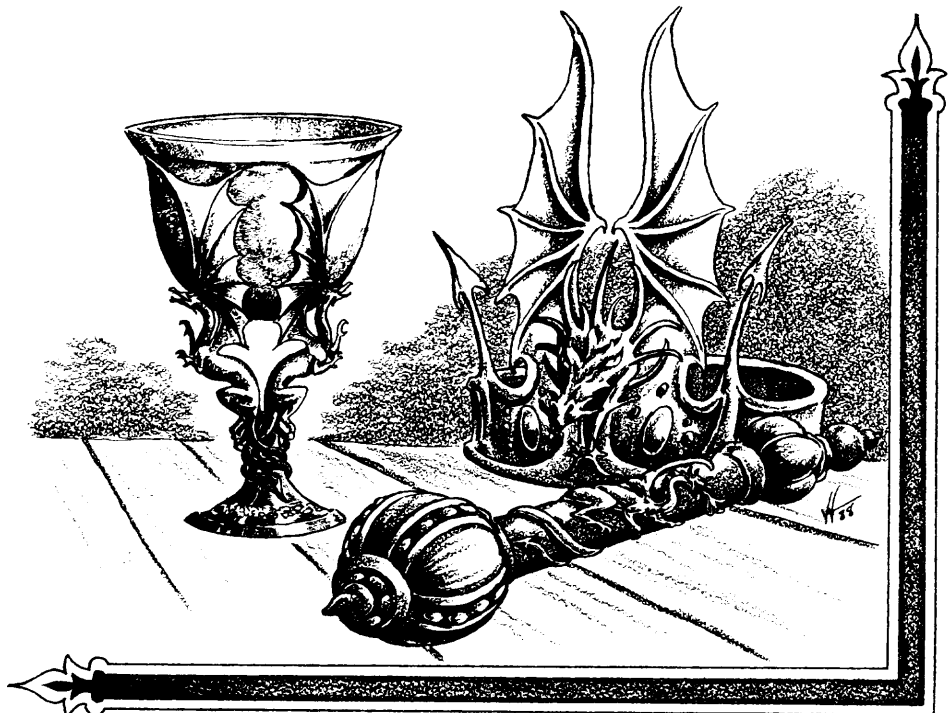
Kender knows replacement item is magical or of great value: +30%

Kender knows replacement item will help someone he loves: +30%

Kender knows object to be parted with is baneful to himself or someone he loves: +50%

Kender is deliberately lied to and deceived in order to get him to part with object *: +20% (if the lie is reasonable and the DM rules the kender would believe it)

* Of course, only neutral or evil characters would deliberately try to con a kender out of something he possesses in order to benefit themselves.





Sivak Draconians



(A lecture by Argentia)

"Well, yes, Is'pose Sivaks do seem odd to you humans."

The silver dragon yawned (much to the alarm of her audience), She could have polymorphed into her human form, but her dragon voice carried better.

"As you probably know, Sivaks were created from our eggs."

A note of bitterness crept into the dragon's voice. "We don't know how many of our young died in Sanction. The Sivaks thus formed are the most physically impressive draconians, with a sturdy form and evident musculature beneath a shining hide. Their wings also gleam, but their eyes are dark. Their odor is a mixture of hot metal and smoke; their voices are sibilant and dry. I can never repress a shudder at seeing one, and knowing that it might have been created from one of my eggs."

Argentia paused, a faint quiver in her voice, but then continued resolutely

"Sivaks ate the elite troops of the draconians. Sivaks don't have the use of magic—but they are formidable warriors, as many of you humans discovered to your cost. In battle, a force of Sivaks works well as a team; often, a band seems almost to be able to read the minds of their comrades and know what their fellows are doing. Their teamwork is matched by a grasp of tactics that enables them to defeat many groups of opponents of equal fighting skill. Many of you humans underestimate their intelligence—and you die as a result." There was a note of pitying contempt in the dragon's voice, as if to say that she would not be so foolish.

"Their ability to fly also surprises and confounds their opponents, and if overmatched they can flee. This has come in to its own since the fall of Neraka has led to many Sivaks becoming bandits. It's only the lack of effective magic that limits these forces from wiping the floor with you."

A note of respect almost overcame the distaste in her voice.

"Sivaks don't fear much. Like most draconians, they find us metallic dragons disquieting, and may well flee from us if they do not have strong leadership. They are also afraid of the Dragon Highlords; I

think this fear was built into them by the foul sorcery that created them, to prevent their disobeying their masters. Certainly the mere sight of Highlord armor commands instant respect in a Sivak.

"Sivaks are intelligent, but they are not inventive. Nor have they any breadth of vision, for which we should perhaps be grateful. No Sivak would ever dream of ruling Krynn—or even Ansalon. Even their most grandiose schemes are small. Thus, without leadership, they become merely bandits. While many of you suffer because of this, the bands do not threaten the fragile peace of Ansalon.

"Sivaks eat virtually anything, and often do. I've heard that they particularly enjoy eating elves—do they taste nice, or something? Sivaks are also heavy drinkers. I believe—correct me if I'm wrong—that for humans, alcohol induces euphoria and a deterioration of vision and reflexes. For Sivaks, however, alcohol instead improves their senses; their hearing and vision become more acute. Unfortunately, alcohol also makes them aggressive, as it does for humans, but it doesn't affect their thinking. A drunken Sivak is a dangerous foe, for its reflexes are unimpaired. You've been warned.

"For some reason, the roll of dice and the fall of cards fascinate Sivaks, and they spend much time gambling. At stake is usually money, alcohol, or sometimes their prisoners. However, Sivaks seldom gamble with anything truly valuable—such as their lives.

"Like most draconians, Sivaks also enjoy making others suffer. I know this is caused by the abishai that replaced the dragon soul—but the fact that my offspring delight in others' agony still hurts. As you all know, the bandit groups are characterized by their senseless viciousness. It is better to die than be taken prisoner by Sivaks."

People in the audience nodded grimly, perhaps recalling their own experiences.

"Sivaks have partially inherited one other trait from their parents. They can shapechange, but only into the form of someone they kill. When a Sivak kills, for a moment there is a flicker of life energy between the victim and the Sivak. This life energy activates the Sivak's normally

dormant shapeshifting power, and the Sivak may take on its victim's form. Of course, when the Sivak dies, the life energy flicker gives the Sivak its killer's form.

"This shapeshifting can be very confusing in battle, but it also gives Sivaks a useful tool when they go spying. Unlike their cousins, the Auraks, they can remain in the shapechanged form as long as they wish, while they explore or spy in human lands. Fortunately, even in their shapechanged forms, animals and sometimes young children are distrustful of Sivaks. Cats spit at a Sivak, their fur bristling, while dogs bark or slink away and horses rear at their approach. Watch for these signs if a stranger visits—it might be a Sivak!"

handling Sivaks

Sivaks have a strong grasp of tactics, and can be expected to outwit all but the most well-organized opponents. In combat, they have a number of advantages over a human force.

First, they can fly. This gives Sivaks a third dimension in which they can fight; opponents can be attacked from above as well as from all around. An aerial attack is likely to be very confusing for a party used to thinking in only two dimensions. In particular, Sivaks can attack mages even though there are fighters in front of them. A party could lose its magic in the first couple of rounds of combat. Sivaks can also charge into combat faster than adventurers may expect, perhaps giving the Sivaks an advantage in the first few moments of a fight.

Finally, Sivaks have a powerful shape-shifting power. In a battle, this could sow confusion among their enemies. In particular, as a battle begins, flying Sivaks might attack the enemy commander. Then a Sivak in the commander's form could confuse or demoralize even a powerful opposing force into surrender or flight through apparent treachery, cowardice, or impossible orders.

One saving grace is that Sivaks have no magical spell abilities. They are well aware that this is their great weakness. Thus Sivaks will take any opportunity to obtain magical items. A number of Siv-



aks carry magical blades snatched during the fall of Neraka or in raids. When designing individual Sivaks, always consider what magical items they might have, and what they can do with them.

Sivaks also use their shapechange ability as a spying tool. In shapechanged form, a Sivak can penetrate deep into an enemy camp, either to gather information or to assassinate a major opponent (or perhaps both). Sivaks may also set out to capture an opponent, and keep him alive until they need a spy, whereupon the captive dies and a Sivak takes on the corpse's form.

Of course, the only limitation to the *shapechange* ability is that the Sivak does not take on the memories or abilities of the victim. A Sivak is unlikely to be able to fool anyone who knew the real person well. However, Sivaks are bright enough to take this into account when planning their spying missions.

DMs should ensure that Sivaks act intelligently. For a start, unless driven by a powerful leader, Sivaks do not fight to the death. Instead, they fly to safety or flee if a battle turns against them. Equally, they do not go into battle where the odds are greatly against them unless forced to by someone they fear more—such as a Dragon Highlord or a dragon. Nor will they fight openly where an ambush is possible. As bandits, they normally attack only weaker forces.

Like all the draconians, Sivaks do not have any creativity. They cannot invent a new scheme or plot; anything they come up with is based on ideas they have seen before. They can elaborate on old ideas with great skill, but new concepts are beyond them. Equally, they cannot think of grand schemes, and many find banditry advanced enough. Sivaks prefer to be told how to think by others.

Sivaks, although they work well as a group, are all individuals. It is worth a DM's time to determine personalities and natures for any individual Sivaks encountered. Certain features are very common among Sivaks: They enjoy the suffering of others, and they enjoy alcohol, because of the feeling of power it gives them. Alcohol is addictive to Sivaks, and lack of alcohol could kill a heavily addicted Sivak

through the effects of withdrawal. Sivaks only consider money a means to obtain equipment or victims to torture.

Sivak Lair

Total Party Levels: 20 (average 5th)

Set-Up

* As the party rides along one evening, they find a freshly dead horse near the track, clearly once the mount of a Knight of Solamnia. In a nearby cliff a fire glows, and dark shapes move.

The Lair

Three sivaks have captured Sir Iain MelKanthus, a Knight of Solamnia, and are planning to torture him. He is desperately trying to explain the Oath and the Measure to them, trying to make the Sivaks treat him honorably.

The Sivaks have their lair about 30 feet up a sheer cliff in a shallow cave. The three Sivaks are Slirihn, Taylhok, and their leader Dhinselu.

Slirihn is uninterested in Sir Iain's rubbish. It considers honor to be a trap for fools. It is only interested in alcohol and is trying to sidle over to a cask the Sivaks obtained a couple of days ago. If letting the human talk means the other two do not see what it is doing, so much the better. Of course, once it has had a drink (or three) then it will be in favor of killing the human—slowly. Slirihn is the proud owner of a *two-handed sword* +2 (1d10+2 points of damage) which gives protection from fire; the blade is called Fireward.

Slirihn: AC 1; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 6; hp 36; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+2/2d6; THAC0 11 with sword, 13 with tail; SA nil; SD +2 on saves; MR 20%; AL NE

Taylhok is a quiet Sivak, who finds MelKanthus's comments fascinating. It does not agree with what MelKanthus says, but wants to hear more. Taylhok has an inquiring mind; Taylhok's dragon heritage is holding its abishai soul's desire for blood and suffering in check.

Taylhok: AC 1; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 6; hp 31; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10/2d6; THAC0 13; SA nil; SD +2 on saves; MR 20%; AL NE

Dhinselu finds humans fascinating as objects of study. It wants to listen to Sir Iain's creed; it tells itself that knowledge might reveal a weakness of the Knights, but it finds an odd attraction in the Code. It will not let the other two begin their torture of Sir Iain.

Dhinselu: AC 1; MV 6"/(15")/18"; HD 6; hp 37; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10/2d6; THAC0 13; SA nil; SD +2 on saves; MR 20%; AL LE

Sir Iain is aware that he is likely to die; were the positions reversed, he would kill Sivak prisoners without a moment's hesitation. However, he will die as a Knight should, proclaiming the Code. If he can convince the Sivaks not to torture him, or even to follow the Code, so much the better.

Sir Iain (Knight of the Order of the Rose): AC 8; MV 12"; Ftr 5; HD 6; hp 13 (41 when uninjured); #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 with fists; THAC0 16; SA & SD nil; AL LG

If the PCs try to rescue Sir Iain, they must scale the cliff. They then only have a nine-foot-wide ledge on which to fight. Sivaks who fall (or are thrown) off the edge merely fly back into the fray; humans may fall onto the rocks by the river, suffering 6d6 damage. If Slirihn gets the chance, it throws Sir Iain over the cliff.

Sir Iain could well lead the party into new adventures.

If the PCs rescue Sir Iain (whether the Sivaks survive or not), they should get approximately 1,800 experience. If Sir Iain dies, only award 450 XP, however many Sivaks are killed. Treasure is up to the DM.

NPCs of the Saga



FISTANDANTILUS ♦ JUSTINIUS ♦ BAS-OHN KORAF ♦ LADONNA ♦ SOTH ♦ STEEL-TOE ♦ THEROS IRONFELD ♦ TOEDE

Fistandantilus

23d-Level Human Magic-User

STRENGTH 9

INTELLIGENCE 18

WISDOM 16

DEXTERITY 15

CONSTITUTION 16

CHARISMA 15

ALIGNMENT Neutral Evil

THAC0 11

AC 9

HIT POINTS 16

EQUIPMENT

Bloodstone pendant, for casting lichdom spell. Other gear, often powerful magical items, depending on the time and circumstances.

ABILITIES:

Languages: Common, Magius, Qualinesti Elf, Dwarven

Grip: Fistandantilus's cold, powerful grip inflicts 1-3 points damage.

Spell Use: He can cast five spells from each level up to eight, and three 9th-level spells every day. Fistandantilus's spell books include almost every spell ever written, including those dealing with lichdom.

history

The tale of Fistandantilus is interwoven with that of Raistlin Majere, for those two personalities merged and their fates were the same. Fistandantilus was born before the Cataclysm. Like so many sorcerers, he began his career wearing the Red Robes of Neutrality, but soon after shifted to Black in search of greater power. People acclaimed Fistandantilus as the greatest wizard who ever lived, and by far the most evil. Yet his ultimate ambition lay outside the world. Fistandantilus hoped to travel into the Abyss, where he would defeat Takhisis herself, the Queen of Darkness.

If he was to enter the Abyss, Fistandantilus had to find and use a magical portal between the planes. To learn where this gate could be found, he bargained with Astinus, bribing the historian with the one form of riches that chronicler

valued—knowledge. Fistandantilus made Astinus the *Globe of Present Time Passing*, a ball of crystal that enabled the Chronicler to observe all that happened in the world, instantaneously. In return, Astinus gave the wizard a hint that revealed where the portal lay. The gate was in the dungeons of Zhaman, a magical fortress on the plains of Dergoth, where the mountain dwarves of Thorbardin challenged their relatives, the Hill Dwarves.

Mobs stormed the Towers of High Sorcery, and the Cataclysm came, but Fistandantilus continued to pursue his dream. From the impoverished victims of the Cataclysm he formed a great army that marched on Thorbardin, searching for riches. Thus began the Dwarfgate Wars. The army of Fistandantilus seized Pax Tharkas and could possibly have defeated all of Thorbardin and achieved its goal. But Fistandantilus pressed on to capture Zhaman prematurely, advancing ahead of his supply lines in one of Krynn's most disastrous military blunders. No matter. Once Fistandantilus reached the gate he had no more use for the war.

The archmagi who built Zhaman's gate had great respect for the power that they had unleashed, and they laid stern restrictions on its use. Only a male magician of great evil, accompanied by a priestess of ultimate good—acting in unison—could pass through it. Fistandantilus duped Denubis, Paladine's chosen cleric, into helping him and together they passed into the Abyss. Had he succeeded, Fistandantilus might well have become a god. However, at the moment that he left Krynn, a gnomish magical item interacted with the portal's magic and ruined it. The resulting explosion engulfed both armies of the Dwarfgate War. Only one dwarf, Kharas, who had opposed the slaughter from its beginning, remained alive. Fistandantilus himself survived somehow, but his quest was over.

Fistandantilus, who had slain two entire armies by accident, was near to being conquered by old age. The thought tormented him, and to preserve his power, he sent his spirit to strange planes. He became a lich, searching for the body of a new magician

who could achieve his dream. So it was that Raistlin encountered him during the Test. The ambitious young wizard traded part of his own self for traces of Fistandantilus's power. Raistlin became diseased and morally foul. In return, Fistandantilus bolstered Raistlin's spells and provided help at unexpected times. Eventually, Raistlin returned through time to fight him; the two struggled to inhabit each other's bodies, and Raistlin won. Or so we assume. For history repeated itself, and Raistlin/Fistandantilus fought in the Dwarfgate Wars again and lost himself in the Abyss, perhaps forever.

Personality

Fistandantilus was cruel, but he took no pleasure in sadism; he was a genius, but uninterested in learning, except as means to an end. He loved only power. Fistandantilus behaved efficiently, without ethics or convictions. When he was dying, his one fear was that sorcery like his would vanish from the world.

abode

Almost anywhere in Krynn, based at the Tower of High Sorcery in Palanthus. He lived from slightly before the Cataclysm to almost a century after it, but can be encountered much later than that as a lich.

appearance

Height 5'4", Weight 120 lbs.

Age: Centuries old

Gray, wizened skin and bright black eyes



Justinus of the Red Robes



16th-Level Human Magic-User

STRENGTH 10

INTELLIGENCE 17

WISDOM 18

DEXTERITY 15

CONSTITUTION 10

CHARISMA 16

ALIGNMENT Neutral

THAC0 13

AC 9

HIT POINTS 38

ABILITIES:

Languages: Common, Magius, Qualinesti Elf, Gnome

Walks at only 6" due to handicap

Spell Use: Five spells per day of levels 1-5, and three 6th-level, two 7th-level, and one 8th-level spell per day. As Head of the Conclaves, Justinus has access to almost any spell book he desires.

history

Justinus was not among the Heroes of the Lance, nor did he play any great role in the wars. He rose to power when the wizards of the Black Robes and the Red condemned Par-Salian as ineffective and forced him to resign. Justinus undertook the boring, yet essential, job of returning Ansalon to normalcy. His ascension signals the rise of Neutrality in Krynn.

Justinus barely had enough competence in magic to survive his Test, and the spectral foes there tore his right leg, leaving it paralyzed. In later years, he learned to stiffen it so that he could walk, but this crippling wound prevented him from taking part in any noteworthy adventures. The handicap forced him to remain in his chambers, with no entertainment except for books of magic. Eventually, this study made him one of Krynn's mightiest magicians.

When Par-Salian fell out of favor, there were no active contenders for his position. . . except Justinus. Since he had always been neutral, Justinus had no notable enemies to block his nomination. Although the wars were over, Justinus

inherited a precarious seat. Anarchy reigned in the distant corners of Krynn. The Dragon Highlords had destroyed the old governments, and now they were also gone, leaving nations leaderless. Rampant inflation tore through civilized lands, bitter famine struck those devastated by war. Elves, dwarves, and Knights of Solamnia quarreled over the lands they had won. Worse yet for Justinus, Raistlin, the sole wizard among the Heroes of the Lance, betrayed his fellows in a quest for power, and nearly freed Takhisis from the Abyss again. People had always hated sorcerers, and this could inflame that prejudice.

Justinus handled Raistlin's legacy masterfully. He could not conceal the Sly One's adventures completely, so instead, he proudly announced them, emphasizing Raistlin's altruism in sacrificing himself to stop the Queen of Darkness from passing the open Portal. Few ever realized that, without Raistlin, the Portal would never have been opened at all. Indeed, Raistlin's "heroism" made magic respectable at last.

The ravages of war could never be completely healed, but Justinus was able to settle many of the world's debates, for people trusted his fairness and wisdom. Justinus put down rebellions ruthlessly, often empowering brutal despots when they could maintain order. Due to these policies, draconians still rule some isolated parts of Ansalon. So, as Justinus's enemies claim, the Red Robes not only drove evil from the world but invited it to creep back.

Personality

Justinus remains completely impartial at all times, deploring evil, but tolerating great atrocities when they seem justified. He abhors hubris and recklessness as much as willful malice. After all, Krynn's greatest disaster, the Cataclysm, was brought on by the Kingpriest's good intentions, and the self-righteous Seekers did much to prevent knowledge of the True Gods from returning to Ansalon. Justinus is extremely conservative and cautious with all forms of power.

Although he has achieved great power

in magical arts, Justinus is only a mediocre wizard. He has advanced over his many years, but he exhibits none of the unquenchable genius that propels many sorcerers into their careers. His high ranking comes from political ability. Justinus is skilled in the art of doing favors for people who will later do favors for him, and his neutrality can only be an advantage in politics, since he does not make enemies among either the Black Robes or the Red.

abode

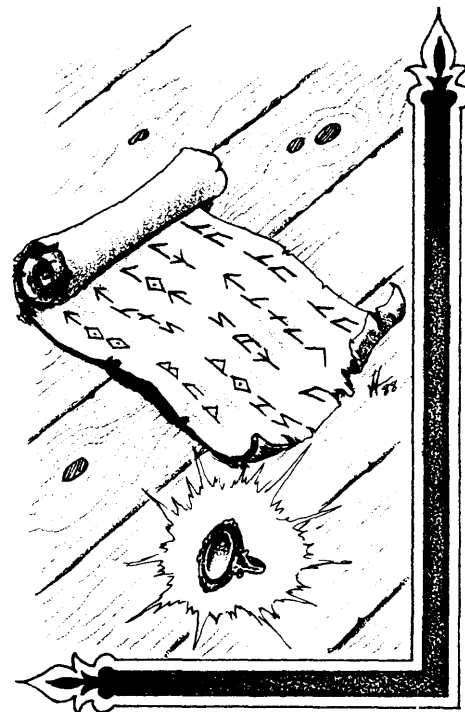
The Tower of High Sorcery in Palanthus. Justinus lived from before the War of the Lance to roughly 50 years after it.

appearance

Height 5'11", Weight 150 lbs

Age 68

Dark hair, brown eyes, walks with a severe limp



Bas-Ohn Koraf, Minotaur

10th-level Minotaur Fighter

STRENGTH 18/90

INTELLIGENCE 8

WISDOM 6

DEXTERITY 10

CONSTITUTION 14

CHARISMA 6

ALIGNMENT Neutral Evil

THACO 12

AC 6

HIT POINTS 55

WEAPONS:

Dirk (Dmg 1d4)

Belaying Pin (Dmg 1d6)

Whip (Dmg 1d2)

EQUIPMENT

As selected by player, 2,550 gpw max

LANGUAGES: Common, Minotaur

history

Koraf was born on the island of Mithas in the year 330 AC. Mithas is inhabited almost entirely by minotaurs, a vicious race known for their savagery in battle and their expertise in sailing and ship building.

As a boy, Koraf was apprenticed to Efroth, a master shipbuilder in the capital city of Nethosak. For many years Koraf and the other young apprentices studied and worked under Efroth, learning not only shipbuilding and design but sailing as well.

One of the other minotaur apprentices, Diro by name, was jealous of Koraf, as his work always seemed to win the approval of the master. Determined to win his place at the head of the class, Diro took every opportunity to discredit Koraf in front of their mentor.

Finally, after 12 years, the time came for the apprentices to graduate. The final test was to design and build a sailing vessel, and sail it alone under the watchful eye of Efroth.

On the night before the test, Diro snuck into the shipyards and sabotaged Koraf's vessel.

When morning dawned, the eager

apprentices lined the docks next to their ships. One by one, Efroth sailed out with each apprentice, judging the performance of the ship and its captain. When Koraf's turn came, he eagerly sailed out of the harbor, knowing nothing to be amiss.

About a half mile out in the water, the ship began to leak. Suddenly a great cracking sound erupted from underneath, and the ship split in two. Koraf managed to grab a piece of the wreckage and make his way to shore but Efroth was not so lucky. Hit by a mast when the ship split apart, he instantly drowned.

That night, at a local tavern, a very drunk Diro began bragging to his companions about how he had sabotaged Koraf's vessel. Before his friends could silence him, a cold sober Koraf, who had been standing nearby and overheard the conversation, grabbed Diro by the neck and strangled him.

Minotaur law forbids the killing of one minotaur by another unless it takes place in the Circus, an arena established to determine superiority. Koraf was arrested and thrown into jail, there to await his sentence of death.

In prison, Koraf became acquainted with a human female pirate named Maquesta. Maquesta was awaiting the same sentence as Koraf, her's for pirating in Mithas waters. After talking to Koraf, and sensing that she could trust the embittered minotaur, Maq showed him a dirk that she had managed to conceal from her captors when she was brought in.

Using the weapon to overpower the guard, Koraf and Maq fought their way to her vessel, which lay impounded in the Nethosak harbor, and escaped.

From then on they became fast friends. Koraf became first mate on Maquesta's ship the *Perechon* and together they sailed the seas of Istar looting and pirating.

Personality

Koraf is more refined and gentle than most minotaurs, a result of living among humans. In a fight, however, or when his temper is aroused, he quickly reverts to the bestial savagery of his kin. Perhaps because they shared so many secrets together, Koraf holds a warm spot in his heart for Maquesta, his captain. He hesitates to call it love, as he feels that Maquesta, who seems to be highly attractive to human males, could never love a man as ugly and bestial as himself.

Koraf loves the sea and is highly skilled in the art of sailing. Sometimes, when he is navigating the waters of northern Ansalon, he almost feels himself becoming part of the ship.

abode

Koraf can usually be found on board the ship *Perechon* sailing between Goodlund and Nordmaar or wherever an opportunity for personal gain may present itself. Between pirating or sailing for hire, the *Perechon* is usually docked at Flotsam, a seedy village situated near Blood Bay. Here Koraf may be found frequenting his favorite tavern, The Sailor's Curse.

appearance

Height 6'6", Weight 220

Age 22

Brown fur, bestial face, 18-inch-long curved horns on each side of his forehead, brown eyes, rings through his nose and right ear



Ladonna



17th-Level Human Wizardess

STRENGTH 9
INTELLIGENCE 18
WISDOM 16
DEXTERITY 18
CONSTITUTION 12
CHARISMA 18
ALIGNMENT Lawful Evil

THACO 13
AC -3
HIT POINTS 49

EQUIPMENT

hat of disguise, ioun stone (stores up to 10 levels of spells—usually wish and identify), brooch of shielding, scarab of protection, mirror of mental prowess, rod of absorption

ABILITIES :

Languages : Common, Magius, Silvanesti Elf, Qualinesti Elf, Solamnic, Dwarven, Kender, Gnome

SPELLS:

magic missile (x2), mount, read magic, sleep, audible glamor, ESP forget, invisibility, stinking cloud, fireball, hold person, lightning bolt, slow (x2), charm monster, fear, phantasmal force, suggestion, wall of fire, animate dead, cloudkill, hold monster, time heal, wall of force, death spell, guards & wards, geas, legend lore, charm plants, power word stun, limited wish, demand, symbol, meteor swarm

Note that Ladonna has access to and has researched many more spells than these, including some otherwise castable only by the illusionist subclass.

NON-WEAPON PROFICIENCIES:

Astrology (lb/less); Healing (14/less); Plant lore

History

Ladonna's true origin is somewhat shrouded in mystery, although it is known she spent her childhood in the city of Palanthus, where her father owned a smithing shop. This was when the dreaded Tower with its cursed grove first

became an object of interest to her.

Much of Ladonna's early life was spent upon the streets and back alleys of Palanthus, where she became exposed to some of the city's more undesirable elements.

As a teenager, she became apprenticed to Arianna, a sorceress of the Black Robes; she spent much time with Arianna in the Tower of Wayreth once her mistress came to sit on the Conclave. Arianna's position of chief overseer of the Tower's massive library meant that Ladonna spent the majority of her time cataloging or searching through the writings there, gaining a wealth of knowledge in the process.

Arianna died when she was but 50, and Ladonna succeeded her as overseer of the Library, thus assuming a seat on the Conclave at the young age of 30.

It was during this period in her life that she and Par-Salian had a brief but torrid relationship. A result of this, which Par-Salian never knew, was that a daughter was born to Ladonna, who sequestered herself in Arianna's keep in Northern Ergoth for the last months of the pregnancy.

Motherhood did not fit with Ladonna's plans, and so Kira, the child, was given by Ladonna to a trusted henchman with the command to deliver her to a selected family in Palanthus, where she might be brought up. The henchman departed by ship from the kender port of Hylo, but no trace of him, the child, or the vessel was ever found again.

Since that time, Ladonna has often wondered about the fate of her daughter, feeling somewhat guilty over having abandoned her. In her heart, she nurtures the hope that Kira lives and is happy.

Returning to her work on the Conclave, Ladonna submerged herself in some of its less glamorous aspects, proving herself to be an efficient bureaucrat. This led to her occupying a position of authority second only to the Master of the Order, who hated such mundane matters.

A few years passed, and the day came when Ladonna decided she was most fit to head the Black Robe order. Others in the Order, thinking her an easily-controlled figurehead, agreed and band-

ed together, secretly electing her head of the Conclave over the current master. In a surprise attack on the Master's fortress, he was overcome and Ladonna assumed Headship of the Conclave.

Those who thought Ladonna nothing more than a puppet quickly learned differently. Within a fortnight, the skilled knife of the assassin visited her most dangerous opponents; those left untouched quickly offered their unqualified support.

Since then, Ladonna has proven herself to be ruthlessly protective of her position, appointing several trusted acquaintances to the Conclave.

Ladonna's greatest test came during the War of the Lance. Not only did she have to contend with the ambition of Raistlin, but also with the defection of many of her Order to the forces of the Queen of Darkness.

With the end of the war, she must now deal with her new threat: Dalamar. By whatever means possible (at least two of her assassins reside in Palanthus, awaiting an opportunity to strike), she hopes to eliminate him and seize the Tower as her own.

Personality

Ladonna is quite personable and pleasant, and those meeting her are always impressed by her beauty, wit, and charm. But all this screens her ruthlessness and devotion to her position.

abode

Most often, Ladonna can be found at the Tower of Wayreth. And certainly PCs of the Black Robes taking the Test or those summoned to meet the Masters of the orders will be introduced to her—no doubt to be thoroughly enamored.

At other times, she resides at her large keep in the secluded mountains of Northern Ergoth.

appearance

Height: 5'7"

Age: 64 (actual), 34 (apparent)
Steel grey hair, brown eyes

Lord Soth

Deathknight

STRENGTH 18199
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 9
DEXTERITY 14
CONSTITUTION 17
CHARISMA 17

THACO 12
AC 0
HIT POINTS 59

WEAPON:

Bastard Sword (Dmg 2d4+5)

ABILITIES:

Languages: Common, Old Solamnic, Qualinesti Elf

Death Knight Powers:

Affect undead as 6th-level cleric

75% Magic Resistance

Reflects spell (on a 11 or lower with 1d100)

Summon nightmare steed (once per ten years)

Detect invisibility, detect magic (at will)

Fear (continuous) 5' radius

Fireball (20d6) (once per day)

Gate twice per day (75 % chance of success): Type I (20%), Type II (25%), Type III (30%), Type IV (20%), Type VI (5%)

Power word (any, once per day)

Symbol (pain/fear,) (once per day)

Wall of ice (at will)

history

Lord Soth was a Solamnic Knight of the Rose in the final days of Istar. He was considered to be a paragon, a shining symbol representing everything a Knight should be. But he was also a man of great passions; those passions led him down the road to Darkness.

Soth fell in love with an elfmaid, a disciple of the Kingpriest of Istar. He was married to another woman at the time, but he could not control his desires. He murdered his wife, claiming that she died in childbirth (although she was barren, the child was conceived by the elfmaid) and he brought the elfmaid and their son to live with him at Dargaard Keep.

Then the elfmaid learned what Lord Soth had done to his first wife. She did not abandon him, but prayed to the Goddess Mishakal that he be given an opportunity to redeem himself. Her prayers were answered: Soth would be given a chance for redemption and the power to prevent the Cataclysm, although it would cost him his life.

Soth departed for Istar, intent on stopping the Kingpriest. But he was waylaid by elven women, disciples of the Kingpriest, who knew of Lord Soth's crimes. They intimidated that the elfmaid was unfaithful. Soth, overcome by rage, believed that she was luring him to his death at Istar not because she wanted to restore his honor, but because she wanted to be rid of him.

So Lord Soth turned aside from the path of honor forever. He returned to Dargaard Keep and shouted false accusations. But the Cataclysm had taken place; all he found were the images of his wife and son burnt into the stone around his throne. He thought he could hear her dying words, the words of a curse, condemning Soth to eternal torment.

Soth sat on his throne, and commanded his Knights to remain still, which they did, fearing his wrath. There they remained, until they died. But the gods punished them all. The elven women who lied to Soth about the elfmaid, delighting in their malice, were turned into groaning spirits, banshees. The warriors of Soth's guard, who had remained unquestioningly loyal, and who had murdered Soth's first wife at his command, were turned into skeleton warriors. Lord Soth's punishment was the most terrible of all—he was transformed into a death knight, a corrupted mockery of his former majesty. Every night, they were condemned to remember their crimes in song, a horrific cacophony later described by Ariakas as being far worse than the torments of the Tower of High Sorcery. Lord Soth's crimes became known to the public after the Cataclysm, and this contributed greatly to the disrepute of the Knights of Solamnia.

There they remained, until Kitiara took up residence in Dargaard Keep. Soth immediately became fascinated, as

so many living men did, with Kitiara. He served her faithfully during the War of the Lance, although often questioning her feelings toward Tanis. Eventually Lord Soth decided that Kitiara should join him in death, and he plotted her downfall.

Personality

Lord Soth still retains some of the honor of a Knight of the Rose. He will fight an opponent honorably, often without a sword, for his powers as a death knight render martial prowess superfluous. Soth is not dedicated to spreading evil or helping the designs of the Dark Queen, Takhisis; his curse is his private passion for Kitiara. Soth is a realist—he has absolute knowledge of his capabilities, and he readily admitted that Raistlin (following the defeat of Takhisis) was his superior. When he talks, he speaks with a hollow, chilling voice, and his demeanor is terrifying, even to kender.

abode

Lord Soth dwells at Dargaard Keep in northeast Solamnia, which he does not leave except at the behest of Kitarra.

appearance

Height: 6'5" Weight: 300 lbs

Age: 379

Soth has a skullface with two tiny pinpoints for eyes. He wears well-worn armor with the faded symbols of a Knight of the Rose.



Steel-toe, half Ogre



9/9 Level Half-Ogre Fighter/Thief

STRENGTH 16
INTELLIGENCE 9
WISDOM 7
DEXTERITY 12
CONSTITUTION 17
CHARISMA 8
ALIGNMENT Chaotic Evil

THAC0 12
AC 3
HIT POINTS 50

WEAPONS:
Two-handed sword (Dmg 1d10)
Knife (Dmg 1d3)
Steel Pegleg (Dmg 1d6)

EQUIPMENT
Horse, stolen goods as selected by player 2,300 gpw max.

ABILITIES:
Languages: Common, Ogre, Goblin, Minotaur, Thieves' Cant
Thief Skills:

Hide in Shadows: 56%
Pick Pockets: 70%
Hear Noise: 30%
Open Locks: 62%
Climb Walls: 98%
Find/Remove Traps: 60%
Read Languages: 45%
Move Silently: 70%
Backstab Attack

History

Steeltoe was born in the ogre community of Blode, set in the Khalkhist Mountains in central Ansalon, in the year 64 AC. The ogres of Blode plied their trade as bandits and highwaymen; no traveler passing through the area was safe from attack. It was not uncommon for ogres of this bandit tribe to take human and elven women as captives during their raids on passing caravans, for use as slaves and concubines. Any offspring that resulted from these loathsome alliances were always put to death.

Steeltoe, named Deathrot at birth, was the product of such a mating between human and ogre. Steeltoe managed to

escape his cruel fate when his human mother, now driven half-insane by her circumstances, managed to slit the throat of her abuser and flee the camp. For four years, mother and half-ogre son wandered the wilderness. The crazed mother filled the boy's head with tales of wicked men and the need for strength and vengeance. "Take what you can, Deathrot," she told him, "and damn anyone who gets in your way."

Finally his mother, now clearly insane, abandoned him on the steps of a temple, for every time she looked into the boy's dark eyes, she re-lived the horror of her violation.

The young half-ogre was adopted by Lenthlar, a nobleman of Solamnia. The nobleman took him to his estate and arranged for the young lad's training. Steeltoe proved to be an excellent student and his appetite for books was voracious. His skill at book-learning seemed matched only by his skill at weaponry, for at that time, no young man's education was thought complete without training in swordplay. However, Steeltoe never forgot his mother's lessons. While still a teen, he murdered his mentor while he slept, and made off with whatever valuables he could carry.

Escaping into the wilderness of Solamnia, the young man hired himself out as a mercenary, taking any job no matter how dangerous, to increase his ill-gotten fortune.

On one such assignment, to recover a griffon feather for a Black-Robed wizard's incantation, Steeltoe lost his left leg in the ensuing battle. To replace his lost limb, he fashioned a steel peg, attached at the knee. He has been known as Steeltoe ever since.

Using his now considerable fortune, Steeltoe gathered a band of bandits and disillusioned men (such as the then-reviled Knights of Solamnia) and together they staged a raid on the ogre camp at Blode.

After exacting vengeance for his mother, Steeltoe and his band moved on, killing and stealing to acquire what he believed was rightfully his.

Personality

Steeltoe truly believes that the world owes him a living. He will use any means, no matter how cruel, to get what he wants. He has a particular hatred for ogres as well as females, especially human, and will go out of his way to abuse and degrade them.

Because of his high intelligence and education, Steeltoe has developed the knack of discovering the innermost desires of friend and foe alike and using this knowledge for his own gain. This ability has made him a feared and respected leader.

Although not particularly fond of wealth, Steeltoe realizes what it represents and so will go to considerable lengths to amass his fortune.

In battle, he is a ruthless fighter, granting no mercy toward his opponent and expecting none in return.

abode

Steeltoe's camp is situated near the Solanthus Road that leads from Palanthus in northern Ansalon to Solanthus. Any travelers to Solanthus may find themselves prey to Steeltoe and his bandit army.

The camp itself is more like a small town than a bandit hideout, consisting of several crudely-built log huts. Steeltoe's headquarters is set in the largest and easily the finest constructed of the cabins in the center of the camp. The bandits' animals, food, and most of their wealth are sheltered in a large cave near the camp. Guards are few, as most people in the area are aware of Steeltoe's reputation and give the site a wide berth.

appearance

Height 7', Weight 310

Age 36

Yellowish skin, Flat-nosed face, Black hair, green eyes

Theros Ironfeld

3d-level Human Fighter

STRENGTH 17

INTELLIGENCE 12

WISDOM 16

DEXTERITY 12

CONSTITUTION 13

CHARISMA 9

ALIGNMENT Neutral Good

THAC0 18

AC 2

HIT POINTS 27

ARMOR: Chain and shield +2

WEAPONS: Hammer, Spear

EQUIPMENT Smithee tools, rope; as selected by player, 1,400 gpw max.

LANGUAGES: Common, Qualinesti Elf, Solamnic

SPECIAL ABILITIES: *Silver arm of Ergoth*, attached to right shoulder, enables Theros to forge *dragonlances*, acts as *ring of regeneration*

Background

Theros Ironfeld is the only child of Farrin and Shelia Ironfeld. He was born in the back of the family's wagon in the wilds of Abanasinia. Farrin was a blacksmith of some talent, and the family spent their days roaming from village to village soliciting work from the area's many barbarian tribes. As soon as Theros was old enough to hold a hammer, Farrin began teaching him the smithing secrets he had acquired through a lifetime.

When Theros was 18, the family's travels brought them to an isolated region along the west coast of Abanasinia. After a meal of sand oysters, which Theros found unpalatable, the family camped on the beach for the night. Morning found Theros's parents writhing in agony—the oysters had been infected. Theros panicked as he realized that his parents were dying.

A group of wandering Qualinesti elves heard his cries and rushed to help. The elves forced a medicinal quith-pa syrup

down the throats of his parents. Unfortunately, the quith-pa reacted with the oysters and killed Theros's parents instantly. The Qualinesti were stunned, but Theros was in no mood for an explanation and fled as fast as he could.

Theros spent the next five years in seclusion, consumed with hatred for elves. He threw himself into his work and became a master smith. It was only after a chance meeting with a scholar did Theros come to realize he had misinterpreted the actions of the elves.

To assuage his guilt, Theros spent the following decade in the company of elves of all races. The elves eventually overcame their suspicion and came to trust him. In return for his smithing, he asked only for food and a place to sleep.

In time, Theros longed for the company of his own kind. Bidding farewell to the elves, he returned to Abanasinia, eventually journeying south to Solace where he set up shop. Because of his skillful work in steel, Theros became the most respected citizen of Solace. The years drifted by in peace.

But that changed when the growing threat of war brought a draconian army sweeping into Solace. In the blink of an eye, Solace was destroyed. Theros would never forget the atrocities of the draconians, their hissing laughter as they set fire to homes and businesses, the merciless slaughter of his friends and neighbors.

In the rebellion that followed, Theros became a leader of the underground and re-established his friendship with the Qualinesti, growing particularly close to an elf named Gilthanas. Theros managed to smuggle many exiled elves out of fallen Solace. The effort was not without a price—Theros lost his right arm in a bloody skirmish with a draconian squad.

Eventually, Theros joined Gilthanas's people. While in exile, he stumbled across the ruins of a mysterious temple and found an arm of solid silver. Theros claimed the treasure after defeating the gray wraith guarding it. Incredibly, the silver arm magically bonded to him, and Theros was able to use the arm as if it were his own.

In subsequent weeks, Theros found himself drawn further into the growing

conflicts among the elven tribes. Theros took advantage of his trust among the tribes to instigate negotiations.

But Theros's greatest achievement was yet to come. In year 3 5 2 of the Age of Dragons, Theros appeared before the Council of Whitestone on Sancrist Isle and presented a *dragonlance*, an ancient artifact used to defeat the evil dragons. With the *silver arm of Ergoth* and the *hammer of Kharas*, Theros was able to forge *dragonlances*. His noble efforts helped bring about the eventual collapse of the Dragonarmy alliance.

Personality

Theros is distant in his relationships with others and is usually perceived as cold and unfeeling. In truth, Theros longs for emotional intimacy, yet keeps everyone at arm's length. Theros has never been able to accept the deaths of his parents, and refrains from getting close to others, fearing he may lose them, too.

Theros's hatred for the draconians is matched only by his loyalty to his comrades. He is quiet and thoughtful, often pausing before speaking to measure his words carefully. He is especially sympathetic to the oppressed and disabled.

abode

Although he has spent little time there since his involvement in the War of the Lance, Theros makes his home in Solace. He has a modest house built in the branches of vallenwood trees. The front room is used as a workplace and is filled with blacksmith's equipment, all in immaculate condition. Behind the workplace is his living quarters. His furniture includes a wooden storage chest, a table made from a tree trunk, and his pride and joy, an iron bed frame forged to look like a lattice of roses.

appearance

Height 6'4") Weight 240 lbs.

Age 48 (at the beginning of the War of the Lance)

Dusky skin, gray eyes, silver arm



fewmaster toede



4th-level Hobgoblin Fighter

STRENGTH 16
INTELLIGENCE 8
WISDOM 11
DEXTERITY 10
CONSTITUTION 16
CHARISMA 6
ALIGNMENT Lawful Evil

THAC0 18
AC 6
HIT POINTS 22

ARMOR: Studded leather armor and small shield

WEAPONS: Short sword, dagger

EQUIPMENT As selected by player, 1,550 gpw max

LANGUAGES: Hobgoblin, Goblin, Common

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Can leap up to 30 feet; all hobgoblin special abilities from the *Monster Manual*

Background

Contrary to popular opinion, Toede didn't crawl out from under a rock, but he was born in a hobgoblin village located near the base of a mountain range in southern Neraka. Toede's mother was the chief cook of their tribe. As is the case with many hobgoblins, Toede never knew who fathered him.

Toede spent most of his early years at his mother's feet, following her around in the kitchen and freely snatching samples as she worked. He shunned the other youngsters who constantly ridiculed him for being overweight. Toede's hatred of them grew along with the size of his stomach, and he vowed to get even.

He did. Toede's mother began every day by preparing a nourishing wheat pudding for the children. One morning while her back was turned, Toede loaded the pudding with crushed quartz crystals and glass fragments. Toede could barely conceal his glee as the hated children clutched their stomachs in agony after

eating the pudding. Several of them died that day from internal bleeding. The enraged tribal leaders arrested Toede's mother for the crime. Toede showed the investigators where his mother kept the crushed quartz, and she was executed.

As rumors of the gathering forces of the Dragon Highlords spread through Neraka, Toede knew he had found his life's calling. When recruiters came to his village, Toede offered to show them where the treasures were kept if they would let him join. The recruiters took him up on his offer and, after sacking the village, Toede was made a foot soldier in the Dragonarmy infantry.

The first assignment of Toede's division was a reconnaissance mission into western Goodlund to survey the strength of the kender forces. By bribing an officer, Toede learned that an assault was planned on a kender outpost the next day. That night, Toede crept out of camp and slaughtered the kender in their sleep. The following morning, Toede proudly presented his commander with a bag of kender tongues. As it happened, Toede had mistakenly attacked a group of kender students on an overnight field trip, but the commander was so impressed with Toede's brutality that he was promoted on the spot.

Toede was despised by his fellow soldiers, in no small part due to Toede's habit of dressing up his subordinates to look like him, then sending them among his enemies as targets for their wrath. Toede's only companions were Sestun, his gully dwarf servant whom he delighted in humiliating, and a fat, shaggy pony whom he taught to spit on passers-by.

Of the many savage operations he supervised, Toede was particularly pleased with the assault on Solace. In a matter of days, Toede turned the elegant tree-city into a smoldering graveyard. To further ingratiate himself with Verminaard, Toede planned to deliver a slave caravan of refugees to Pax Tharkas to work in the iron mines. However, this operation was less than successful when the caravan was raided and several choice prisoners escaped.

Verminaard was indeed furious, but Toede had the last laugh, outliving Vermi-

naard as he did most everyone who got in his way. In fact, Toede outlived enough superiors to eventually climb to the rank of Dragon Highlord in charge of the White Dragonarmy. Though Toede went far on cunning and treachery, like all tyrants, he came to a violent end. Legend has it that Toede died at the hands of Kronin Thistleknot, the son of one of the kender Toede murdered years ago in Goodlund.

Personality

Though he comes across as an intimidating bully, at heart Toede is a coward who will go to any lengths to save his own skin. Toede is a groveling bootlicker to his superiors, but he won't hesitate to doublecross them if it furthers his own ambitions.

Toede delights in the misery of others. He will go out of his way to see first hand a village ravaged by war or poverty. He enjoys attending public executions, even if he's unfamiliar with the accused or the crime. He also enjoys hunting with arrows dipped in slow poison, so that he can follow wounded prey for miles and savor every moment of their agony.

abode

Toede has no permanent home. As a military officer, Toede usually settles for a temporary apartment in the headquarters of his current commander. His apartment is always identifiable by its stench. Typically, dirty and bloody uniforms are piled in a corner along with the remains of the past month's meals. Stacks of unread documents cover the desk. Spilled wine bottles are everywhere.

Toede is hardly sentimental, but he always drags an iron chest with him to each new dwelling. The chest is filled with ears, fingers, toes, and other rotting souvenirs from past battles.

appearance

Height 5'5" Weight 210

Age 40 (at the beginning of the War of the Lance)

Flabby, wispy white hair, speckled gray skin, red eyes

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POB 756
Lake Geneva
WI 53147 U.S.A.

TSR UK Ltd.
The Mill, Rathmore Road
Cambridge CB1 4AD
United Kingdom

ISBN 0-88038-574-X



9231XXX1401

\$9.95 U.S.